



T.C YEDITEPE UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTE OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES

MASTER OF ARTS PROGRAM IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

UNIVERSITY PREPARATORY SCHOOL STUDENTS' AWARENESS ABOUT GRAMMAR
AND PRAGMATICS

BY

SİNEM KAPLAN

ISTANBUL, 2019



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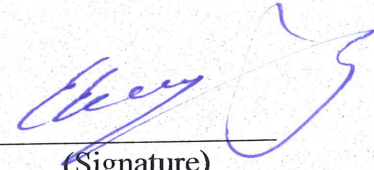
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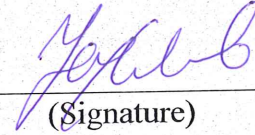
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Thesis Abstract

Sinem Kaplan “University Preparatory School Students’ Awareness about Grammar and Pragmatics”

Pragmatic awareness is one of the most significant elements of foreign language learning as well as the grammatical awareness. Since speech acts tend to occur in natural conversations, they are essential parts of foreign language ability. This study aims to investigate the pragmatic and grammatical awareness level of 50 high intermediate preparatory school students from different departments in an English medium university who have not received any formal pragmatic instructions before.

The data were collected through a Discourse Completion Task (DCT) including 20 written academic and non-academic scenarios consisting of speech acts which aims to demonstrate whether preparatory school students are able to determine the pragmatic and grammatical failures. Based on participants’ answers in Discourse Completion Task, four focus groups were formed to understand their perception on the grammatical and pragmatic awareness.

Both qualitative and quantitative data were coded to compare the participants’ awareness level and to investigate the underlying reasons. The results of the DCT analysis displayed that participants’ pragmatic awareness level is higher than their grammatical awareness level even though they have not received any explicit instructions on pragmatic competence. The analysis of the focus group interviews suggested that the underlying reason behind this result is participants’ attitudes towards grammatical knowledge. They do not think grammatical knowledge is the most indispensable part of foreign language competence. Thus, their awareness level in grammatical knowledge is lower compared to pragmatic awareness.

Key words: Pragmatics, Pragmatic awareness, Grammatical awareness, Speech acts



Tez Özeti

Sinem Kaplan “Üniversite Hazırlık Öğrencilerinin Gramer ve Sosyal Uygunluğa Dair Farkındalıkları”

Edimbilimsel farkındalık, tıpkı dilbilgisi farkındalığı gibi dil öğreniminde iletişimsel yeterliliğin en önemli unsurlarından biridir. Söz edinimleri de doğal konuşmalarda kullanılma eğiliminde oldukları için edimsel farkındalığın önemli parçaları arasında yer alırlar. Bu çalışma İngilizce eğitim veren bir üniversitenin farklı bölümlerinde eğitim göreceğ olan ve daha önce derslerde edimbilimsel farkındalık hakkında öğretimleri olmayan 50 ileri seviye İngilizce hazırlık öğrencisinin edimbilimsel ve dilbilgisi farkındalık seviyesini incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır.

Bu çalışmada veriler ilk olarak 20 yazılı akademik ve akademik olmayan söz edinimleri temelli senaryolar içeren bir Söylem Tamamlama Testi (STT) ile toplanmıştır. Bu testin amacı katılımcıların dilbilgisi ve edimsel problemler içeren senaryolardaki sorunları bulup bulamadıklarını ölçmektir. Öğrencilerin Söylem Tamamlama Testi’nde verdikleri cevapları temel olarak dört farklı grup ile edimsel ve dilbilgisi farkındalığına yaklaşımlarını anlamak amacıyla görüşmeler yapılmıştır.

Katılımcıların dilbilgisi ve edimsel farkındalık seviyelerini ve bunun sebeplerini anlamak amacıyla bu çalışma için hem nitel hem de nicel veriler kodlanmıştır. Söylem Tamamlama Testi’nin sonuçları katılımcıların, daha önce bu konuda belirgin yönergeler almamış olmalarına rağmen, edimsel farkındalık seviyelerinin dilbilgisi farkındalık seviyelerine kıyasla daha yüksek olduğunu göstermiştir. Odak grup görüşmelerinin analizleri de bu sonucun altında yatan sebebin katılımcıların dilbilgisi yeterliliğine karşı olan tutumları olduğunu önermiştir. Katılımcılar dilbilgisi yeterliliğinin yabancı dil öğreniminin en vazgeçilmez parçası olmadığını

düşünmektedirler. Bu sebeple dilbilgisi farkındalık seviyeleri edimsel farkındalık seviyelerinden daha düşüktür.

Key words: Edimbilim, Edimbilimsel Farkındalık, Dilbilgisi Farkındalığı Söz edimleri



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1. INTRODUCTION TO THE THESIS

1.1 Background of the Study

This chapter includes an introduction to the investigated topic, significance of the study, synthesize and critically analyze the “very relevant literature”, problem statement, research questions and hypotheses, overview of methodology, definition of the significant terms and organization of the study.

1.2 Significance of the Study

Language teaching and learning in a non-native country has a lot of challenges because of limited access to natural settings for language use when it is compared to second language environment (Kasper, 2001). While it may demotivate language learners, it also complicates teachers’ jobs because students may not have enough opportunities to perform speech acts in language classes. Taking into consideration the developmental process of language teaching methodologies, the main purpose of learning a foreign language is being able to communicate in real life in an appropriate way. Therefore, it can be said that grammatical development may not be enough for socializing in a foreign language if the speaker does not have a corresponding level of pragmatic competence (Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei, 2001). Some studies (Kasper, 1997) have proved that even a grammatically advanced learner may fail using the target language appropriately. Thus, many models of communicative competence contain pragmatic competence as an essential component in addition to grammatical competence (Bachman, 1990; Canale & Swain, 1980).

By considering all the factors mentioned, this study aims to investigate and compare grammatical and pragmatic awareness levels of preparatory school university students. These

students are chosen from the ones who have the highest achievement in the placement and proficiency exam provided by the private university's testing office. The reason behind this choice is to make sure that the participants have certain level of grammatical knowledge so that it can be compared to the pragmatic one. Since the study also deepens the need and thoughts of the students about grammatical and pragmatic awareness, this comparison may lead the university's curriculum design to be more focused on the students' needs.

The first idea of studying the differences between grammatical and pragmatic awareness of the students evolved from the research done by Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei in 1998. In their study, they compare the awareness of adult foreign and second language learners in addition to English teachers with a wider group of participants through a Discourse Completion Task (DCT) and contextualized grammatical and pragmatic judgement task in the video format. Since the participants were from different countries, environment was a variable in their study. Also, the English level of the participants differed in their research. Thus, proficiency level was another variable in their study, but it does not take place in this research. Even though the participant profiles and research questions in this study are different from their work, the starting point of this research is the DCT used in Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei's research (1998).

Moreover, the results of their study showed that the grammatical awareness of the participants is higher than their pragmatic awareness. Besides, high level of proficiency does not guarantee a corresponding level of pragmatic awareness. Since this research had been done twenty years ago with a different participant profile, it was thought that applying the same DCT with some modifications might have given different results.

Another important aspect of this study is speech acts. The pragmatic and grammatical awareness of students is investigated through speech acts because they are one of the most significant and demanding components of language (Blum-Kulka, 1989). In addition, many

natural settings require using direct or indirect speech acts such as apologizing, requesting or any other nine speech acts studied so far by Kasper (2002). Apart from that, although speech act realization is focused by many researchers studying on pragmatic awareness according to Kasper (1989), there are still some languages like Turkish which don't have a lot of conducted research about speech act realization. As Hymes suggested (2001) "rules of speech acts enter as a controlling factor for linguistic form as a whole". In other words, by considering the significance of studies about speech acts (Blum-Kulka, 1989; Trosborg, 1995), it can be inferred that speech acts are essential parts of linguistic communication. On the basis of those studies, speech acts are utilized in this research to collect data.

1.3 Problem Statement

The main aim of this study is to investigate the pragmatic and grammatical awareness level of preparatory school students who will be taught in English for the following 4 years of their university education. They are expected to have communicative language proficiency including pragmatic and grammatical competence that are included in many different models (Bachman, 1990; Canale & Swain, 1980). To evaluate and compare the level of pragmatic and grammatical awareness, different scenarios consisting of speech acts are used because they tend to occur very frequently in English speaking environments. The purpose of this comparison is to identify students' needs and perceptions about these two fundamental elements of foreign language competence with the help of Discourse Completion Task (DCT) and focus group interviews. The final goal is make a clear decision about if the students need further supplementary instructions on pragmatics in class and if preparatory school program needs embodying pragmatic competence to their curriculum or not.

1.4 Research Questions

In this part, research questions of this study are presented. This study has 5 main research questions. They are provided below:

1. Do preparatory school students in a private university in Turkey display same degree of awareness in grammar and pragmatics?
2. What are their attitudes towards pragmatic errors?
3. What are their attitudes towards grammatical errors?
4. What are the attitudes of students with high pragmatic awareness towards pragmatic and grammatical awareness?
5. What are the attitudes of students with high grammatical awareness towards pragmatic and grammatical awareness?

1.5 Overview of Methodology

The detailed explanation of the methodology will be presented in the next chapter. This chapter summarizes the participant profiles, setting, data collection instruments and data analysis.

Firstly, the participants of the study consist of 50 university preparatory school students who are going to study their departments in English. All of these participants belong to the highest English level class taught in the fall term of 2017-2018 academic year which is B1+. The age range of participants is between 17 and 28. While there are 29 male participants, there are 21 female participants in this study. Yet, gender and age are not variables affecting the results of this study.

Secondly, the study takes place in a private university in Istanbul, Turkey. This university has both Turkish and English faculty programs. In addition, preparatory program is compulsory for the students who enrolled in the English medium programs in this university.

Thirdly, in this study a Discourse Completion task developed by Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei (1998) is used to collect quantitative data while Focus Group Interviews are used to collect qualitative data set.

Lastly, the data analysis process started with an excel chart to be used to analyze the Discourse Completion Task results. On the basis of that analysis, focus groups were formed by considering the provided participant answers in the DCT. Next, two independent researchers who were familiar with the study coded the interviews' transcriptions.

1.6 Definition of the Significant Terms

Turkish L1 speakers: This term refers to those whose first language is Turkish.

Prep School Students: This term refers to preparatory students who failed the proficiency exam prepared by the testing office of the private university that the study took place. They have to study at English preparatory school before they start their departments.

A1 level: This term refers to the first or beginner level of English according to Common European Framework (CEFR).

A2 level: This term refers to the second or pre-intermediate level of English according to Common European Framework (CEFR).

B1 level: This term refers to the third or intermediate level of English according to Common European Framework (CEFR).

B1+ Level: This term refers to high intermediate level students according to UU Placement Exam. All participants in this study are B1+ level students.

B2 Level: This term refers to the fourth or upper-intermediate level of English according to Common European Framework (CEFR). This is also the exit level of UU preparatory program.

EFL: It is the abbreviation of “English as a Foreign Language”. This mainly refers to students who learn English while living in their own country where English is only a foreign language.

ESL: It is the abbreviation of “English as a Second Language”. This is mainly used to refer to foreign students who learn English while living in an English-speaking country.

1.7 Organization of the Study

After specifying the research questions, related literature has been reviewed and data collection methods have been decided. The necessary permissions were received from the director of the preparatory school department. Firstly, the data was collected through a Discourse Completion Task (DCT). Students were informed about the aim of applying the task in the class in advance. Then, before the focus group interviews students filled in and signed a consent form to demonstrate that they were willing to contribute to this study. Later on, the data were analyzed and results were stated. Lastly, some suggestions for further studies were provided based on the results.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, different models of language competence have been reviewed in the beginning. Additionally, the role of grammatical knowledge in each model has been detailed. Secondly, pragmatics, pragmatic competence and pragmatic awareness have been explained. Next, speech act theory and the definition of and strategies for requests and apology as speech acts have been reviewed. Then, findings on the speech act of request and apology have been explained. Finally, the relevance of oral and written modalities in communication strategies has been mentioned.

2.2 Language Competence

Language competence can be defined as the ability to use target foreign language accurately and appropriately (Yule, 1993). Grammatical knowledge has had a vital role in language competence model since the evolution of the term. All models of language competence have a part covering grammar and grammatical knowledge even if the name of the term is different in each. Grammatical knowledge existed in the literature as ‘linguistic competence’ (Chomsky, 1957, 1965). After Chomsky, the term ‘communicative competence’ was evolved by Dell Hymes (1967, 1972). The term has been developed by different linguists with either language assessment or language teaching in mind (Celce-Murcia, 2008). Since grammatical awareness is one of the most important key concepts of this study, the evolution of the term ‘language competence’, the differences between these models and the role of grammar in each of them will be reviewed in the following parts.

2.2.1 The role of grammatical competence in language competence models

As mentioned above, the historical evolution of language competence started with the linguist Noam Chomsky (1957, 1965). He named the term as 'linguistic competence' because he focused on linguistic knowledge claiming that all the social factors were outside of the field of linguistics (Celce-Murcia, 2008). His definition of linguistic competence refers to the rules for sound systems turning into morphemes and morphemes into sentences. Furthermore, he claimed that language structure and its acquisition were context-free because innate language acquisition is adequate to account for language acquisition (Celce-Murcia, 2008). He also mentioned the distinction between language competence and language performance. Chomsky (1950) defined language competence as a representation of language in the mind as the form of abstract rules. On the other hand, language performance was related to how people actually use language in everyday life. He thought language performance was highly influenced by linguistically irrelevant distractions such as anxiety. Therefore, he focused on language competence rather than language performance because he thought that language competence demonstrated the actual proficiency level of the learners without the effects of grammatically irrelevant conditions.

As a reaction to Chomsky's model, Hymes argued the importance of the context and appropriate language use. Thus, he added the notion of sociolinguistic competence, which referred to being able to use and respond to language appropriately, to linguistic competence (Hymes, 1972). As a result, the term communicative competence derived. Dell Hymes opposed the isolation of sociolinguistic competence which is supported by Chomsky (1950) since it is impossible to obtain ideal speaker and hearer relationship. He defined communicative competence as the combination of the grammatical rules and how to use language appropriately in a range of diverse social contexts. Following Hymes, as another contribution to the term

communicative competence, strategic competence was added as an important component of language competence by Canale and Swain (1980). It refers to the ability to cope with problems occurring during interaction and performing different types of planning in that case. They also change the term 'linguistic competence' to 'grammatical competence'. After a few years, Canale (1983) added discourse competence, referring to the ability of processing the language beyond sentence level, to the model.

In addition, a further model has been proposed by Bachman (1990) on the basis of the results related to the studies on language testing. He explained communicative competence in two main categories which also have separate sub-categories. The first category was 'organizational knowledge' involving of grammatical knowledge and textual knowledge. In his model, grammatical knowledge had the same role of Canale & Swain's grammatical competence. It includes the knowledge of vocabulary, syntax, morphology and phonology (Baker, 2011). What is more, textual knowledge is similar to Canale & Swain's discourse competence (Celce-Murcia, 2008). Textual knowledge comprises the knowledge of forming a text by joining the necessary utterances together in both written and oral cohesion (Baker, 2011). The second category is pragmatic knowledge which has been explained with details in the next section. It consisted of illocutionary competence and sociolinguistic competence. The other component in Bachman's model (1990) is sociolinguistic knowledge having a similar role with Canale and Swain's sociolinguistic competence (Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei & Thurrel, 1995) which is the ability to use appropriate language in different contexts.

Another communicative competence model was proposed by Celce-Murcia et al. (1995). The components of their model were linguistic competence, strategic competence, socio-cultural competence, discourse competence and lastly actional competence which were first mentioned by

them. Their model is similar to Canale & Swain's except for two differences in terminology. Firstly, they changed the term grammatical competence in Canale & Swain's model to linguistic competence in order to add lexis and phonology to grammar (i.e., morphology and syntax). Secondly, they modified sociolinguistic competence to socio-cultural competence to emphasize the need for cultural background knowledge (Celce-Murcia, 2008).

Lastly, after thirteen years, Celce-Murcia (2008) proposed a revised version of their model by adding formulaic competence and interactional competence. Formulaic competence is supplementary to linguistic competence because it refers to the language chunks usually used in everyday conversations such as routines, collocations, idioms and lexical frames (Celce-Murcia, 2008). The second new component, interactional competence, had three sub-components which enhanced actional competence with conversational competence and non-verbal/paralinguistic competence (Celce-Murcia, 2008). While actional competence refers to the knowledge of performing common speech acts correctly, conversational competence mentions the turn-taking system in conversations like opening and ending a conversation or interrupting. The third sub-component of interactional competence is non-verbal/paralinguistic competence comprising kinesics (body language), proxemics (use of space by interlocutors), haptic behavior like touching and non-linguistic utterances with the interactional import.

To conclude, despite the differences in terminology, from the beginning of the evolution process of language competence, all the models of it mentioned above include grammatical knowledge. The following figure illustrates the historical development of those components taking place in the various models of language competence.

Figure 2.2.1 Chronological evolution of ‘language competence’ adopted from Celce-Murcia (2008)

Chomsky (1957, 1965)	Hymes (1967, 1972)	Canale and Swain (1980)	Canale (1983)	Bachman (1990)	Celce-Murcia et al. (1995)	Celce- Murcia (2008)
Linguistic Competence	Linguistic Competence	Grammatical Competence	Grammatical Competence	Organizational Competence (Grammatical&Textual)	Linguistic Competence	Linguistic Competence
	Sociolinguistic Competence	Strategic Competence	Strategic Competence	Pragmatic Competence (Illocutionary&Sociolinguistic)	Strategic Competence	Strategic Competence
		Sociolinguistic Competence	Sociolinguistic Competence		Sociolinguistic Competence	Socio- cultural Competence
			Discourse Competence		Actional Competence	Interactional Competence
					Discourse Competence	Discourse Competence
						Formulaic Competence

Grammatical knowledge has been ranked as a vital part of each proposed model throughout the evolution of language competence. It has been elaborated either under the title of linguistic competence or grammatical competence.

2.3 Pragmatics

As a subfield of linguistics, pragmatics can be defined in myriad different ways. To begin with, pragmatics is mainly the relationship between social context of interaction and language use (Bardovi-Harlig & Mahan-Taylor, 2003) while it is also defined as the relationship between the meaning and context (Austin, 1962). Even if the definitions are different, context has a vital role in all of them. Context has two types defined by George Yule (1993) which are linguistic context and physical context. First, linguistic context guides listeners to understand which meaning is intended in a particular sentence with the help of group of words used together in the sentence. Second, physical context refers to the location of the conversation. Location also helps listeners to interpret the intended meaning (Yule, 1993). Context has an importance in pragmatics especially when learning a second language because learning another language is not only communicating in that language but also familiarizing with its culture as well. What speakers mean by the selection of the utterances is highly related with culture. Another definition of pragmatics is “speaker meaning” (Yule, 1993) which is also strongly affected by the culture. The more speaker and listener have common assumptions and expectation during conversation, the more they communicate even without using words (Yule, 1993). In this case, L2 (i.e., second language) can also be seen as a representative of the second language culture. Therefore, learning a second language may necessitate learning its culture to some extent (Schmitt, 2002). It is necessary to be able to adjust the speech style successfully according to some culture related factors such as social factors, social status and formality. Social factors refer to the social distance

between the speaker and the listener, the age of the addressee and the gender of the addressee (Holmes & Wilson, 2017). Linguistic choices are highly affected by these social factors which are mostly shaped by the impact of the culture. To begin with the social factors, the first social factor social distance means how well the speaker knows the listener. Their relationship affects the style of speech because the better the speaker knows the listener, the more casual the speech style becomes. On the other hand, when the participants in an interaction do not know each other well, they tend to use more formal and standard forms (Holmes & Wilson, 2017). The second social factor affecting the speech style is the age of the addressee. The way people talk to an adult and a child differs because the age of the addressee may require some adjustments in speech style. To illustrate, talking to a young children or an elderly necessitates simplifying the language in both vocabulary choice and grammatical structures. People tend to use short and explicit sentences when in a conversation with a child or an old person (Holmes & Wilson, 2017). The third social factor which has an impact of the culture related style of speech is the gender of the addressee. While women and men already tend to have differences in speech style, they also adjust their speech according the person's gender in a dialogue. For instance, women tend to use more standard speech forms which are used in more formal contexts. However, men generally prefer to have more vernacular speech style which is more appropriate to informal contexts (Holmes & Wilson, 2017).

In addition social factors mentioned, style of speech is affected by the social distance between the listener and the speaker. Social distance is also about the participants' relationship. The style of speech is impacted by the social status of the addressee. Despite it is considered as international, the culture of the target language may affect the degree of the appropriate speech

adjustment. People's linguistic choices are not the same with an audience from the same social background and an audience who has a higher social status (Holmes & Wilson, 2017).

The last culture related factor affecting the style of speech is formality. Formality refers to the setting or the social context of the interaction. The place that the conversation takes place has an effect on the speech style depending on the formality of the environment. For example, a low court is a very formal social setting which overrides every personal relationship no matter how close the listener and the speaker. Even though two lawyers are good friends, they cannot use a casual speech style in the court (Holmes & Wilson, 2017).

All in all pragmatics is a dimension referring to the relationship between the meaning and the context (Austin, 1962). Since context is highly related with the culture of the target language, the culture related social factors must also be taken into consideration while defining pragmatic competence which will be reviewed in the next section.

2.3.1 Pragmatic competence

Pragmatic competence is defined as the ability to use language according to social rules and contexts. Pragmatic competence is considered as a significant indicator of language proficiency; therefore, many researchers have focused on the effect of pragmatic competence on L2 proficiency for second language learners.

Former studies about pragmatics (Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei, 1998; Allami & Naeimi, 2011; Taguchi, 2011; Cook & Liddicoat, 2002) have showed that second language learners who do not learn English in an English-speaking (ESL) country and native speakers of the target language tend to have different levels of pragmatic competence because according to Kasper (2001), foreign language setting (EFL) has limited access to opportunities for learning L2

pragmatics compared to second language environment. In other words, when students learn the target language in their own country, their access to target language is limited. For instance, learners have to speak L2 in and out of class when they are in second language environment however, in foreign language setting, L2 can only be spoken in class in a limited time.

Nevertheless, grammatical development may not ensure pragmatic development all the time. It means that an advanced learner in grammar may not have to have a corresponding level of pragmatic competence (Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei, 1998). In a foreign language context, acquisition of pragmatic competence involves both acquiring mastery in linguistics in addition to social and cultural elements (Derakhshan & Eslami, 2015). To illustrate, a competent learner in pragmatics need to be able to combine different linguistic forms and their functions as well as cultural rules and norms. Moreover, demonstrating this skill in a real communication is also essential for being a competent learner (Taguchi, Naganuma & Budding, 2009).

Pragmatics needs to be involved in language teaching curriculums to improve language learners' communicative abilities in the target language in a well-rounded way (Yuan, Tangen, Mills, & Lidstone, 2015). However, some text books used in classes are lack of pragmatic knowledge and relevant examples despite of the fact that classroom teaching has an important role in improving language learners' pragmatic awareness (Bardovi-Harlig, Mahan-Taylor, Morgan & Reynolds, 1996; Bardovi-Harlig & Griffin, 2005).

2.3.2 Pragmatic awareness

Pragmatic awareness has crucial importance in many aspects of pragmatics especially in the framework of “awareness” and “noticing” developed by Schmidt (1993). Schmidt is the father of “Noticing Hypothesis” which claims that awareness of language and selective attention

ease the process of language learning (Derakhshan & Eslami, 2015; Schmidt, 1993, 1995, 2001, 2012). Schmidt (1993, 2001) explained “noticing” as the first level of awareness. He believes that acquiring linguistic forms in the target language can only occur if learners notice them. Thus, the attention needs to be directed to particular learning domain because more attention means more learning (Schmidt, 2001). Additionally, he further states that what is noticed in input by learners becomes the intake for learning because learners need to pay attention to the input they want to learn (Schmidt, 1995, 2010). Obviously, noticing is not enough for a comprehensive learning; it is just the first phase (Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei, 1998). There is a higher level that is “understanding.” It is essential to distinguish “noticing” from “understanding” because “noticing” basically has to do with collecting the evidence as examples while “understanding” requires generalizations beyond instances (Schmidt, 2012). Thus, understanding can be seen as a higher level of awareness and if learners understand the input, they learn the most. However, if learners notice the input, they learn less than the ones who understand but still more than the ones who do not notice (Leow, 1997, 2000).

To sum up, learning without awareness would be restricted because of the lack of ability to express the instances (Schmidt, 2012). Following Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei (1998), this study also accepts that “noticing” and “understanding” refers to different processes in language learning.

Since pragmatic competence is argued to be of paramount importance in learners’ L2 proficiency, language learning needs to move beyond a linguistic or grammar focused model. Instead, a communicative model which foregrounds teaching pragmatic knowledge, i.e., how to use the target language appropriately in social interactions in different contexts (Hymes, 1972), would be more appropriate for the foreign language learners like students in Turkey (Barron,

2003; Hymes, 1972). Some researches proved that all around the world most of the language learners do not have any instruction of pragmatic knowledge and competence; as a result, insufficient pragmatic competence can be thought as a global problem of language teaching (Ji, 2008; Liu, 2004). This lack of awareness might be diminished by raising language learners' pragmatic awareness if learners attain information about pragmatic features of target language (Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei, 1998). To this aim, language learners' perceptions about pragmatics need to be expanded because learners' pragmatic awareness and pragmatic competence are highly interrelated (Schauer, 2006). When language learners have a wide awareness of pragmatics, they are most likely to have sufficient pragmatic knowledge. Following that, their pragmatic competence develops. Consequently, they tend to become pragmatically competent language learners, as well (Bardovi-Harlig & Griffin, 2005).

All in all, for this study, noticing pragmatics is required and adequate while understanding is only facilitative but not necessary all the time. Even though native speakers might not need a conscious realization of speech acts to comprehend the pragmatic meaning, foreign language learners, especially the ones who do not have an extensively developed pragmatic competence in L2, may need a conscious awareness of pragmatics to facilitate comprehension (Garcia, 2004).

2.4 Studies on the Grammatical and Pragmatic Awareness in EFL and ESL contexts

There are not many studies comparing grammatical and pragmatic awareness of foreign and second language learners in the past. Only a very small number of studies have paid attention to pragmatic and grammatical awareness in EFL and ESL context. Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei (1998), Schauer (2006) and Niezgoda and Röver (2001) has conducted studies comparing grammatical and pragmatic awareness of EFL and ESL students. Since it was Bardovi-Harlig and

Dörnyei's study (1998) that gave the idea to both Niezgodá and Röver (2001) and Schauer's study (2006) as well as the present study, the body of their research is presented in the following.

Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei's study (1998) intended to compare pragmatic and grammatical awareness of students and teachers in EFL and ESL context in addition to the native speakers of English. The target language in their study was English and the grammatical pragmatic feature focused was errors. The study was focused on the modality of grammatical and pragmatic perception and awareness of the participants. After piloting the judgment task in written form, contextualized pragmatic and grammatical judgment task in video format were used to collect data. The scenarios on both in written and video format included sentences which are pragmatically appropriate but ungrammatical, grammatical but pragmatically appropriate and both grammatical and appropriate ones. In addition, scenarios were constructed to elicit speech act of request, apology, suggestion and refusals. Video task in addition to written Discourse Completion Task (DCT) was used to benefit the richness of the contextual information provided by video recordings. The participants in that study consisted of 543 nonnative English speakers from EFL and ESL contexts, Hungary and the U.S. Besides, data obtained from 112 English teachers in training from Italy, 28 native teachers of American English and 25 native Hungarian English teachers. The results of their study displayed that there were three factors playing an important role in learners' awareness which are environment, proficiency level on and authentic L2 input access. Firstly, the results on environment showed that the participants from ESL context considered pragmatic mistakes more salient in contrast to participants from EFL context. It can be said that it is the effect of ESL context. Regardless of being a teacher or a learner, participants who belong to EFL group provided similar answers when they learn English in the same environment. Secondly, results on proficiency effect showed that students with high

proficiency from EFL context had higher scores in both grammatical and pragmatic items than students with low proficiency from EFL context. On the other hand, ESL students were provided completely opposite scores. Since ESL context provides more authentic pragmatic knowledge compared to EFL context, the scores of EFL and ESL students differed. Thirdly, participants who had recently arrived to the ESL contexts had lower pragmatic scores than the ones who had spent at least three months in the United States before participating to this research.

Similarly, Niezgoda and Röver (2001) also replicated Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei's (1998) study by using the same data collection tools. The participants were students from both EFL and ESL contexts. Yet, the results were not in line with the original research. The EFL learners from Czech Republic recognized a higher number of pragmatic problems than the ESL learners from Hawaii. Besides, EFL learners considered not only pragmatic but also grammatical problems more salient than did the ESL learners. In other words, EFL learners were more aware of pragmatic problems than the ESL learners. On the other hand, one of the findings of Niezgoda and Röver's (2001) study agreed with the results of the original study. In both studies participants from ESL context perceived pragmatic errors more serious than grammatical errors.

Another study which replicated Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei's (1998) research was conducted by Schauer (2006) with EFL students from Germany, ESL students studying at a British University and also British native speakers. The same Discourse Completion Task (DCT) and the videos containing 20 scenarios were used to elicit data. However, to be able to extend the investigation, semi-structured post hoc interviews were developed. Thanks to one-to-one interviews, researcher could find out if the participants detected the correct errors in the Discourse Completion Task (DCT) and the reasons why they perceived a problem as inappropriate or incorrect. In contrast to Niezgoda and Röver's (2001) study, the results showed

that native speakers and ESL learners detected more pragmatic errors than the EFL learners in Germany. On the other hand, one finding of the study was in complete agreement with both Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei's (1998) and Niezgodna and Röver's (2001) study. Participants from ESL context in all of these studies perceived pragmatically inappropriate scenarios more serious than grammatically incorrect scenarios. Another finding in a line with Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei's (1998) study but in contrast to Niezgodna and Röver's (2001) is that EFL group rated grammatically problematic scenarios more than the pragmatically inappropriate ones. As a conclusion of Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei's (1998) and Schauer's (2006) research, it is seen that while the main focus is on the grammatical errors in the EFL context, it is not the case in ESL context. Learners from ESL context tend to focus on pragmatic infelicities more.

Together with the three studies investigating learners' grammatical and pragmatic awareness, there are some studies which approached pragmatic proficiency with the angle of production (House, 1996; Takahashi & Beebe, 1987) proved that ESL learners were more successful because of the unlimited access to the authentic L2 input provided by the environment. Nonetheless, EFL students could not perform as well as the ESL group because of the lack of authentic input in the target language (Schauer, 2006).

In addition to studies mentioned above, there are many studies focusing on the proficiency effect on L2 pragmatic competence (Taguchi, 2013; Al-Gahtani & Roever, 2012; Bardovi-Harlig & Bastos, 2011; Allami & Naeimi, 2011; Garcia, 2004). Findings of these studies can be categorized into three groups: positive effect of the proficiency, almost no effects of the proficiency and mixed effects of the proficiency that vary depending on pragmatic features (Xiao, 2015).

The study mentioned above, which is conducted by Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei (1998) is an example of the studies revealing positive proficiency effect on pragmatic competence. In addition to that research, Garcia (2004) also found the positive effect of proficiency by using a speech act identification task. The task included four indirect speech acts which are corrections, offers, requests and suggestions as well as dialogues requiring participants to select the correct speech act. The data was collected through a multiple-choice questionnaire in ESL context. Nonnative participants were grouped according to their TOEFL results based on proficiency levels. The results displayed that the native speakers of English and high proficiency learners had higher identification scores of speech acts compared to low proficiency group. Yet, the scores of high proficiency ESL learners and native speakers were very similar, suggesting that high proficiency nonnative speakers could be native-like in identifying the speech acts when they are in ESL context.

In contrast to the studies summarized above, there are also some studies that revealed almost no proficiency effect on pragmatic competence. For instance, Allami and Naeimi (2011) conducted a research on the production of the speech act of refusals with the help of a discourse completion task. The participants consisted of 30 nonnative EFL Iranian speakers and 37 American native speakers. Iranian speakers were divided into three groups according to their TOEFL scores. However, the results displayed that upper intermediate learners transferred more L1 social norms to requests in L2 in contrast to lower intermediate and intermediate learners. Since upper intermediate transferred more Iranian to English, they had more pragmatic failures than the other groups. The results showed that high proficiency in L2 does not always guarantee the same level of pragmatic awareness.

The third category includes studies that reported mixed proficiency effects on pragmatic competence. In other words, these studies revealed the impacts of L2 proficiency being affected by external factors. For example, modalities of pragmatic performance such as recognition and production affect the impacts of L2 proficiency according to a study conducted by Bardovi-Harlig (2008). In this study, proficiency was decided by the course levels. There were 61 participants from intermediate to advanced learners. Four different tasks; a self-reported recognition task, a context identification task, a discourse completion task and a modified Vocabulary Knowledge Scale were administered during the data collection process. The results of the study showed that proficiency affected recognition and production in different ways. Whereas all learners had high recognition scores, they had low production scores. To sum up, proficiency only affects recognition positively but not the production of formulaic expressions.

After summarizing some studies on grammatical and pragmatic competence, the next section investigates the Speech Act Theory because speech acts are vital parts of data collection process in most of the studies on grammatical and pragmatic competence in the literature. Additionally, speech acts occur in natural conversations and they are significant to communicative and pragmatic competence (Bardovi-Harlig, 2001), speech acts and speech act theory are presented in the following section.

2.5 Speech Act Theory

J. L. Austin was the central figure in developing the Speech Act Theory. In his book named "How to Do Things with Words" (1962), he proposed a distinction between two types of utterances (1) Constatives and (2) Performatives. Constatives are sentences that describe if something is true or false while performatives signify and inspire an action. It can be said that a

constative “is” but a performative “does”. For example, a sign saying “The shopping mall opens at 10 a.m.” is a constative sentence. It can be either true or false. One can easily confirm if it is a true constative or a false one. On the other hand, a bin saying “Recycle” invites people inspire or request to recycle their trash instead of conveying a message thus it is a performative sign. Of course a performative ought to have a proper authority in addition it should be clear and comprehensible (Austin, 1962).

Austin also stated that speech acts have three properties which are locutionary act, illocutionary act and perlocutionary act.

1. Locutionary Act: It is an act of saying something with a certain meaning
2. Illocutionary Act: It refers to the performance of an act
3. Perlocutionary Act: It refers to the effect on listener or speaker

To begin with, a sentence like “It is so hot outside” is a locutionary act because it has the literal meaning of utterance. The same sentence could mean that the speaker wants the hearer to stay still and not go outside because it is too hot. In this case, it becomes an illocutionary act. Lastly, if hearer changes his/her mind because of the speaker’s words and does not go out, then it is a perlocutionary act.

John Searle (1969, 1975, 1988), a student of J. L Austin, also contributed to The Speech Act Theory by classifying illocutionary acts, which he defined as a minimal unit of linguistic communication, into five categories. These are representatives, directives, commissives, expressive and declaratives.

1. Representatives: They are used when speakers want to express what they know or believe and highlight that what they say is true. *Believe, conclude, deny, swear and suggest* are some verbs used in representative speech acts.
2. Directives: They are used when speaker wants to make the addressee perform an action. *Ask, order, request, invite, beg and commend* are common verbs used in directive speech acts. It is the hearer who does the action.
3. Commissive: They are used when speakers commit themselves to do something in the future. *Promise, plan, vow, guarantee and bet* are the verbs used in commissive speech acts. Here, it is the speaker who does the action.
4. Expressives: They express how the speaker feels about the situation or what the speakers' attitude is towards an issue. *Thank, apologize, welcome, regret and congratulate* are some verbs used in expressive speech acts.
5. Declaratives: They change the state of the world or a situation with an utterance such as "*I pronounce you man and wife.*" or "*You are fired!*". Declarative speech acts have some requirements like authorization thus, they may not be able to be performed by everyone.

Searle (1969, 1975, 1988) thinks that each verb belongs to one category and each speech act has a particular category. However, sometimes one verb might serve for different intentions or one speech act may fit more than one category (Thomas, 1983). A sentence like "Would you close the door please?" might be a request to get the door closed or a gentle indicator of 'time to leave'. The meaning of a sentence is highly affected by the context, speaker or hearer. Utterances do not always have determined meanings because external factors play an important role in specifying the meaning for the utterances. For instance, the way a speaker apologizes depends on

the relationship or the social distance with the hearer (Thomas, 1983). When a student is late to class, he/she cannot say “How can I make it up to you?” but it may be a proper apology when he/she is late to a meeting with a friend. Another example would be that there are more than one ways of requesting someone to close the door or window. Speaker can say “it is really cold in here”, “I think I need my jacket” or “could you please close the window?”. That is, different sentences might function as one speech act.

2.5.1 Findings on the speech acts

Since speech acts occur in natural conversations, comprehension of speech acts have been identified as a key component of communicative competence (Bardovi-Harlig, 2001). Therefore, there are many studies on speech acts in the literature (Allami & Naimi, 2011; Cook & Liddicoat, 2002; Dalmau & Gotor, 2007; Wannaruk, 2008, Taguchi, 2007). The focuses of these studies are basically the differences between low and high ability L2 learners and native English speakers and the effect of different types of instructions on the developmental process of request and apology.

To begin with, the proficiency level of students and their ability to recognize speech acts is an essential issue in L2 pragmatic studies. Paula Garcia (2004) conducted a study in USA to identify the ability of L2 learners of English (low and high proficiency) and native English speakers in terms of the recognition of indirect speech acts. The results showed that there is a link between proficiency level and speech act realization because high proficiency non-native speakers performed significantly greater than low proficiency non-native speakers (Garcia, 2004).

Another concern of speech act focused studies is type of instruction and teachability of pragmatics. In other words, the effectiveness of instruction on speech act awareness was studied in the literature. To illustrate, a study about speech act of apology and request conducted by Derakhshan and Eslami (2015) showed that instruction for the purpose of raising awareness is amenable to pragmatic features. On the basis of Schmidt's Noticing Hypothesis (1993), the study proved that instruction has a crucial role in raising the learners' awareness on pragmatics as well as contextual factors like social status and distance. Consciousness-raising instruction helps developing recognition of speech acts of request and apology (Eslami-Rasekh, Eslami-Rasekh & Fatahi, 2004; Derakhshan & Eslami, 2015). Additionally, Alcon's (2005) study on effectiveness on video instruction also supports the claim that explicit instruction improves the L2 learner's pragmatic competence in requests. These studies' findings are consistent because they both agree with the effect of explicit instruction on the speech act awareness (Derakhshan & Eslami, 2015).

2.6 Oral and Written Modalities

Another important feature of pragmatic competence is the ability to govern oral and written modalities or the ability to produce and process oral and written modalities (Yule, 1993). Oral and written modalities have been a prevalent research topic studied by diverse scholars. Everyone is curious about the reason why many children cannot write while they are able to learn talking (Tannen, 1982). There are major distinctions between spoken and written language strategies as Ochs (1979) and Chafe (1979) hypothesized. Ochs (1979) regarded written language as written and planned whereas spoken language was identified as spoken and unplanned. In addition, written discourse is decontextualized because it exhibits detachment. In contrast, since spoken discourse requires a high degree of involvement, it is context-bound (Olson 1977). Furthermore, a study conducted by Tannen (1982) indicated that written modalities contain less

words compared to spoken version even though the content of the delivery is the same. Written form combines the ideas in a single sentence if it is possible while spoken version has numerous pauses and follows the speakers' chain of thoughts. Thus, it can be said that written language is more compact. Another important difference between spoken and written modalities is that spoken version is likely to be more informal in contrast to formality of written language (Chafe, 1979). Written forms use more complex structures whereas spoken language has got structures used in oral communication without having a meaning which is named as "empty language" by Lakoff (1975).

2.7 Conclusion

Starting from Chomsky's (1957) model, both the chronological evolution of language competence models in the literature and the role of grammatical knowledge have been mentioned in this chapter. It has been seen that grammatical knowledge has a significant role in each of them even though it may be named differently such as linguistic competence or grammatical competence in different models.

It was also mentioned that EFL learners, who learn English in their country, have limited access the target language which is full of pragmatic information when compared to ESL learners who learn English in an English speaking country. Studies comparing the pragmatic knowledge of ESL and EFL learners such as Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei (1998), Garcia (2004) and Allami & Naeimi (2011) were reviewed. The necessity of pragmatic awareness for the learners to have sufficient pragmatic knowledge (Bardovi-Harlig & Griffin, 2005) was referred. Moreover, Speech Act Theory (Austin, 1962) and the speech acts were explained since they tend to occur in every day conversation (Bardovi-Harlig, 2001). Another reason that speech acts were explained

in detail is that the Discourse Completion Task used to collect the first phase of data comprises of them. Lastly, oral and written modalities were clarified because of being an essential feature of pragmatic competence.



3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the design, participants, data collection methods, procedure and the data analysis of this study are reported in detail. The major aim of this study is investigating and comparing the grammatical and pragmatic awareness of a private university's preparatory school students. For this purpose, two data sets were attained. First of all, a DTC task including 20 questions in the form of a survey was prepared. The DCT was applied to two classes including 25 students for each. Secondly, the collected data were analyzed and the results were used to form focus groups. Four focus groups including six participants in each were created. On the basis of investigating participants' attitudes and perceptions towards grammatical and pragmatic awareness, 10 questions were asked to the participants in each focus group interview (See appendix E).

In an attempt to explore these problems, the research questions were designed by the researcher. The main research questions are exhibited in the following:

1. Do preparatory school students in a private university display the same degree of awareness in grammar and pragmatics?
2. What are their attitudes towards pragmatic errors?
3. What are their attitudes towards grammatical errors?
4. What are the attitudes of students with high pragmatic awareness towards pragmatic and grammatical awareness?

5. What are the attitudes of students with high grammatical awareness towards pragmatic and grammatical awareness?

3.2 Participants

To be able to clarify participants' profiles in this study, the private university's examination process needs to be explained with details.

There were 639 students in the private university's preparatory school in 2017-2018 academic year. In the beginning of the year, all of these students have to take the placement exam prepared by the foreign language department testing unit. This placement exam comprises 100 multiple choice questions. The major purpose of this exam is to decide the correct level of students to place them in their correct English levels. The students who get above 60 points in placement exam qualify to take the proficiency exam. Proficiency exam decides if students are qualified enough to pass their faculties without studying in preparatory school. This exam has three steps which are test part, writing part and speaking part. Test part consists of listening, reading, grammar, vocabulary and closes meaning in the form of multiple choice. Writing part requires writing an essay related to the reading text they read in the test part. Lastly, students have to take the speaking exam in pairs proctored by preparatory school instructors. If students get above 60 points out of 100 in proficiency exam, they do not have to take the preparatory school.

In the beginning of the year, the classes are formed according to the results of these exams. The levels are named as A1, A2, B1 and B1+ for the first module. Every module has 8 weeks. Students have to reach 60 points out of 100 in each module to be able to pass the following level. A1 level refers to the lowest level which is elementary while pre-intermediate

students are placed in A2 level. In addition, B1 refers to intermediate level and lastly, B1+ refers to upper-intermediate level consisting of the students who get between 75 and 100 points in placement exam. These students are placed in B1+ instead of B2 level because B2 level is not offered in the first module in the private university where the study took place. Furthermore, the university's preparatory school policy requires students to pass the proficiency exam after successfully completing prep school education to be able to start their majors in English. Therefore, the participants in this study are supposed to continue their majors in a semester.

According to the Placement Exam prepared by the testing office in 2017 fall semester, two B1+ classes are formed and each class includes 25 students. These B1+ students were chosen on purpose to take the Discourse Completion Task because participants have to have prior English knowledge to be able to understand the given scenarios in DCT. There were 29 male and 21 female participants whose ages varied from 17 to 28 in this study. Since all of the participants' first language is Turkish, mother tongue is not also a variable in this study as well as age and gender. Additionally, these students' faculties are Communication, Humanities and Social Sciences, Engineering and Natural Sciences and Health Sciences. The Foreign Languages Department does not create the classes according to the departments of students. Thus, all of the classes might have students from different faculties and departments. See the table 3.2 for the summary of participants.

Table 3.2

Profile of participants

Participants	Age range	Gender
Preparatory Students	17-28	29 Male & 21 Female
Total		50 Students

All those 50 students replied the DCT. In the end of the DCT, there was a personal information form including 8 questions. The last question asked students if they think they are proficient in English or not. 26 of them considered themselves proficient in English, 15 of them were not sure and the other 9 answered no (see App. for Personal Information Form). None of the participants had stayed in a foreign or English speaking country more than a week. Therefore, participants neither acquire pragmatic abilities nor receive pragmatic based instructions.

According to Kachru's (1986) World Englishes circle, countries were classified in three groups based on the use of English. The first one is the inner circle. This group includes countries such as United States of America, United Kingdom or Australia where English is spoken as the first language. The second group is called outer group. This refers to countries where English functions a formal language. For instance; India belongs to that group. The third group is the expanding countries. Turkey is in this group because English is not one of the formal languages but a foreign language in expanding circle. It has been taught in schools, universities or language schools. In expanding countries like Turkey, people's main motivation to learn English is finding better job opportunities or academic purposes. Yet, since it is not spoken outside of the schools as a formal language, English language learners might only have a few opportunities to practice English in a real life situation. Since the participants in this study learn English in Turkey, this situation may cause lack of pragmatic awareness because of having limited access to L2 pragmatics (Kasper, 2001).

3.3 Data

This study aimed at investigating the research questions in several aspects; thus, the combination of two data collection instruments was necessary to be used. The data sets collected

in this study are Discourse Completion Task (DCT) and Focus Group Interviews. These instruments were designed to serve for answering the research questions.

3.3.1 DCT as a data collection method

The initial data were collected through a discourse completion task (DCT). Discourse completion tasks (DCT) are one of the most popular data collection methods for pragmatics and speech act related second language research including the research of Blum-Kulka & Olshtain (1984), (1987), Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei (1998), Kılıçkaya (2010), Özyıldırım (2010), Halenko & Jones (2011), Khorshidi & Nimchahi (2013), Wijayanto, Laila, Prasetyarini, & Susiati (2013), Lenchuk & Ahmed (2014). There are also some studies which employ role-plays to elicit data (see Derakhshan & Eslami, 2015). Yet, role plays are not necessarily more authentic than situations provided in discourse completion task because it is not possible to make sure participants react the same way in a real life situation. Another reason for not adopting role plays in this study is feasibility problems. Besides, a discourse completion task provides the chance of collecting larger samples of data in a shorter period of time.

3.3.2 Focus group interviews as a data collection method

There are three main types of research interviews: structured, semi-structured and unstructured (Gill, Stewart, Treasure & Chadwick, 2008). In this study, semi-structured interviews were used because during the interviews several key questions were provided to the participants to guide them reflect on their perception of grammatical and pragmatic awareness. Structured interviews were not preferred because they do not enable participants enough flexibility. Since a deeper understanding is necessary in the present study, structured interviews would be a limitation for focus group interviews. Furthermore, unstructured interviews were not

used as a data collection method because of the fact that they are not very organized and time-consuming. Semi-structured focus group interviews helped participants clarify their ideas. Moreover, the interviews extended the data collected in DCT. Participants had already known each other and some of them even shared the same class. Thus, they were easy with each other and contributed other's ideas as well as sharing theirs openly. Furthermore, they did not have any problems in challenging each other's ideas.

3.4 Data Collection Procedure

As the first step of data collection procedure, the discourse completion task was adapted considering the university's preparatory students' English levels. Some of the scenarios were simplified to avoid misunderstandings. The DCT had 20 scenarios taking place in school environment with friends, strangers or instructors. Before it was applied to the actual participants, the DCT was piloted with ten B1+ students from the previous module to make sure that there is no problem with the scenarios. It was seen that students were able to understand the scenarios as well as the instruction given before and while they were answering the DCT. The next step was applying the DCT to the real participants. As it is explained in chapter about participants, there were two B1+ classes including 25 students for each. Participants were informed and none of them were unwilling to participate in. All students took the DCT during the same class hour in their own class. They were given 20 minutes to complete the task but no one needed that much time. In the end of the DCT, there was a personal information form that asked students to write their student ID numbers instead of their names in addition to age, gender and class. There were also eight questions aiming to understand participants' educational background.

The results of the DCT were analyzed on an excel sheet to form the focus groups. According to their level of detecting grammatically and pragmatically problematic situations, four focus groups were created. Ten guiding questions which made students think deeper about the grammatical and pragmatic awareness were asked in each focus group. Four weeks later than the DCT, focus group interviews started. In a week time, all those four interviews were completed.

3.4.1 The DCT

There were 20 items in discourse completion task (DCT) consisting of (a) 8 pragmatically appropriate but ungrammatical, (b) 8 grammatical but pragmatically inappropriate and (c) 4 both grammatical and appropriate sentences. The pragmatically appropriate sentences served as grammatical controls while grammatical sentences served as pragmatic controls. None of the items were both pragmatically inappropriate and ungrammatical. All of the scenarios in the DCT were adopted in a way that participants might face in real life. Since it is possible for a university student to come across a situation like the ones presented in the DCT, participants were familiar with the subjects and the settings of the scenarios. Scenarios took place in school settings such as university campus, canteen or library. The dialogues were between friends, strangers or teacher and a student. Some words in the scenarios were replaced because of being potentially unknown. Some grammatical points were rewritten if they had not been taught in B1+ classes according to the private university's preparatory school's curriculum.

The necessary explanations were provided the students right before they took the DCT. All of the instructions were given both in English and Turkish to make sure that they understand the task correctly. It had been emphasized not to think about answers more than necessary.

4. Students who have the lowest total achievement

Participants were not informed about the procedure of forming groups to avoid the bias. To illustrate, the students who belong to focus group 4 did not know that they were there because of having the lowest achievement in the DCT. Therefore, their motivation was not affected by their underachievement.

3.4.2 Focus group interviews

Focus group interviews were used to gather qualitative data for the present study. The interviews aimed to have a deeper understanding of the participants' perception of grammatical and pragmatic awareness on the basis of the discourse completion task. Since the aim of the interviews was investigating students' deepest thoughts about pragmatic and grammatical awareness, all of the interviews were in Turkish so that the language barrier was avoided.

While preparing the questions to be asked in the interviews, 5 scenarios were chosen from the DCT task to make sure if participants understood the aim of the task. Those scenarios were not chosen randomly. The excel analysis was used to select following scenarios:

- a) The ungrammatical item with the lowest detection
- b) The ungrammatical item with the highest detection
- c) The pragmatically appropriate item with the lowest detection
- d) The pragmatically appropriate item with the highest detection
- e) The control item with the highest detection

These scenarios were selected on purpose because their scores were outstanding. Participants were expected to clarify why they answered the item in that way. Since there were four weeks between the DCT task and the focus group interviews, their own DCT tasks were

handed each student so that they could remember the scenario. This also created a link between the quantitative and qualitative data collected.

In addition to the question about the DCT task, nine more questions were prepared to find out participants' deeper understanding of the grammatical and pragmatic awareness. In the beginning of the interviews, the terms grammatical and pragmatic awareness were explained in a nutshell. Misleading the participants was avoided because they were expected to comment on the questions without being guided. Questions about pragmatic and grammatical awareness were asked as the first two questions of the interview. On the basis of participant answers, the other questions were placed with minimum researcher talk.

After forming the groups and preparing the follow up questions, participants were kindly requested to take part in focus group interviews. They were kind enough to allow time for the study. The purpose of the interviews was explained orally and a consent form was provided right before the interviews.

3.5 Data Analysis

The analysis of the DCT was the first step of data analysis. An excel file was created with item numbers in each column and student numbers in each row. There were twenty column representing the items and fifty rows representing the participants in the file. The items were coded in three different ways in the excel file: (p) for pragmatically problematic items, (g) for grammatically problematic items and (np) for not problematic control items. Correct answers were referred as "1" while incorrect ones were referred as "0". A sample was taken from the actual excel chart is presented below:

Table 3.5

A sample used to form the focus groups from the Excel chart

	Q1 (p)	Q2 (g)	Q3 (p);	Q4 (np)	Q5 (g)
S1	0	1	1	1	1
S2	0	1	0	1	1
S3	1	1	0	1	1
S4	1	0	1	0	0
S5	1	1	1	1	1

As it seen in the sample, when a student could detect the problem in the scenario, s/he got “1” point. However, if s/he failed to detect it, it was represented as “0”. The same procedure was followed for each scenario in the DCT for every student. Every student’s result was classified in four groups which are; grammatical, pragmatic, not problematic control items and total in the end. These numbers were used to design the focus groups. First, the students who have the highest total achievement were grouped. Second, the students who have the highest pragmatic achievement were chosen among the rest. Third, the students who have the highest grammatical achievement were selected. Lastly, the students who have the lowest total achievement were located in the same focus group. What is more, this excel chart was used to calculate the average achievement in each scenario to determine 5 distinguishing items used in the focus group interview questions.

After forming the focus groups according to the DCT results as it is explained above, ten same questions were asked the participants in each group. The interviews were recorded with a tape recorder. Then, they were transcribed by the researcher. Two independent coders who are familiar with the study went through the transcriptions to specify the most commonly used themes by the participants. Their outstanding comments were highlighted to be analyzed in detail.

3.6 Reliability and Validity of Discourse Completion Task

The Discourse Completion Task (DCT) used in this study was adapted from Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei's study (1998). Since the same DCT was used in various times and different contexts, it is considered as reliable. Additionally, the DCT was applied to a pilot group before applying it to actual participants to make sure that it is suitable for students' English level and it is reliable.

When it comes to validity, the results of DCT match the results obtained from focus group interviews. The results of DCT and focus group interviews will be discussed in the next chapter with details. Moreover, two researchers who are very familiar with every step taken in this study claim that the DCT measures what it intends to measure. Furthermore, expert opinion was taken for its validity in terms of the appropriateness of the scenarios.

4. RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

In this section, the results of the study are presented in two main sections. The first section presents the results of Discourse Completion Task (DCT) as the first phase of data collection in this study. The second section presents focus group interviews containing five subtopics.

Data collection process was designed in order to obtain quantitative and qualitative data. In the first stage, a discourse completion task questionnaire was used to determine and compare the level of grammatical and pragmatic awareness of the participants. In this DCT, 20 scenarios are offered to the students. In the second stage, half of these students were classified in four different groups according to the results of the DCT questionnaire. The focus group interviews were conducted with these four groups to get a greater insight about students' perceptions and attitudes towards grammatical and pragmatic awareness.

4.2 The Discourse Completion Task

This section presents the results of the primary data of this study collected through the Discourse Completion Task. The purpose in this section is to discuss the first research question presented below:

1. Do preparatory school students in a private university display the same degree of awareness in grammar and pragmatics?

The DCT questionnaire comprising three parts was filled by 50 preparatory students. The first part includes eight scenarios which are pragmatically appropriate but ungrammatical. The

second part has also eight scenarios that were grammatical but pragmatically inappropriate and the last part has four scenarios that are both grammatical and pragmatically appropriate. None of the scenarios was ungrammatical and pragmatically inappropriate at the same time.

Specific situations, contents and speakers are given in these 20 scenarios to elicit one of four speech acts: suggestion, refusal, request and apologies. All of these scenarios included in DCT describe the same environment, i.e., school setting, as a familiar context for the participants.

While the quantitative data were being entered into an excel file for analysis, correct answers were indicated as “1” and incorrect ones were indicated as “0”. The term “correct answer” refers to the circumstance which students can detect the mistake in that particular sentence for ungrammatical or pragmatically inappropriate sentences by saying “no” to the first question in each scenario. However, if it is one of the four control items in the DCT, correct answer refers to choosing “yes” since those four items are both grammatical and pragmatically appropriate.

In this scenario, students can only add “1” point to their row if they choose “no” for the first question otherwise they get “0” because choosing “yes” means that they failed detecting the pragmatic problem here. The participants should follow the same procedure for all scenarios in the DCT.

In the analysis, pragmatically inappropriate, grammatically inappropriate and both pragmatically appropriate and grammatical items are pooled separately. Also, the totals are calculated in different columns in order to compare students’ level of awareness in terms of grammar and pragmatics separately.

The second part in each scenario is only valid if participants think the scenario is problematic and circle “no” for the first question. In this second part (presented below), the participants are expected to decide how serious they think the problem is.

If there was a problem, how bad do you think it was?

Not bad at all _____:_____:_____:_____ Very bad

The purpose of the second part is to see participants’ perceptions of grammatical and pragmatic mistakes. In addition to their performance in detecting the problems with the first question in each scenario, their thoughts about how bad a grammatical or pragmatic problem is a vital part for both quantitative and qualitative data in this study.

The results of the DCT are discussed in the following section in three categories which are a) pragmatically appropriate but ungrammatical items, b) grammatical but pragmatically inappropriate items and c) both grammatical and pragmatically appropriate items.

4.2.1 Pragmatically appropriate but ungrammatical items

In the DCT questionnaire, eight of 20 items are ungrammatical but pragmatically appropriate. These are questions 2, 5, 8, 9, 12, 14, 18 and 19 (See appendix A). The grammatical errors are categorized in eight groups by being adopted from the original DCT (Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei, 1998):

- (a) tense mistake (e.g., “I don’t sleep well last night”),
- (b) an article mistake (e.g., “That’s a great”),
- (c) a mistake about plurality (e.g., “two cup of coffee”),
- (d) a double marking of the past (e.g., “I didn’t brought it”),
- (e) the misuse of the infinitive (e.g., “Let’s to go”),

- (f) nonuse of do-insertion (e.g., “if you not need them”),
- (g) a word order mistake (e.g., “How I can go to the meeting room?”)
- (h) –ing with a modal (e.g., “Can I bringing it back to you?”).

All of these grammar topics are among the most popular ones covered in B1+ level. Therefore, participants in this study were accepted to have these as prior knowledge.

The data analysis showed that there are only two students who have the highest scores, marked all of eight ungrammatical items correctly. Moreover, there are two other students having the lowest scores, did not mark any of them. The mean scores for individual ungrammatical items ranged from 0,28 to 0,66 out of 1. Furthermore, the mean score for eight pragmatically appropriate but ungrammatical items is 3,5. This means that students managed to detect 43,75% of pragmatically appropriate but ungrammatical items in total.

The pragmatically appropriate but ungrammatical item that participants have the highest achievement score referring to 0,66 is presented below:

Emma has borrowed a book from a classmate, Alison. Alison needs the book back but Emma has forgotten to return it.

Alison: Emma, do you have the book I gave you two days ago? I need it back.

Emma: Oh, I am so sorry but I did not brought it today. I was late this morning.

Was the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there was a problem, how bad do you think it was?

Not bad at all _____: _____: _____: _____ Very bad

Here, there is a grammar mistake on double marking of the past. More than half of the participants detected the mistake in the underlined sentence. There are some possible explanations for that. Students might find the past tense mistake obvious since “Past Tense” is one of the fundamental grammar topics in English; therefore, they may acquire it properly before they reach B1+ level. When it comes to the second part in the scenario which is about how bad they think the problem is, it is seen that among the ones that could detect the problem in this scenario, more than half of them thought it is a “very bad” problem. It is probable that participants think the problem here is very obvious. They believe that if someone makes this mistake, it shows lack of grammatical knowledge rather than lack of attention.

The pragmatically appropriate but ungrammatical item that participants have the lowest achievement score referring to 0,28 is presented below:

John is talking to his teacher. The conversation is about to finish.

Teacher: Well, I think it is all I can do for you at the moment.

John: That's a great. Thank you for your help.

Was the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there was a problem, how bad do you think it was?

Not bad at all _____: _____: _____: _____ Very bad

The problem in the underlined sentence is an article mistake. Only 14 of the participants could detect the problem in this scenario. The reason for this low rate might be the participants' lack of attention because similar to the past tense, articles in English is also one of the most fundamental grammar points covered in earlier stages. Therefore, the participants were expected to detect also this article mistake quite easily. However, this was not the case in this error type. In the second part for this scenario, most of these 14 students marked “not bad at all” in the scale. It

is possible that the rest of the participants could not detect this problem just because they did not notice it which was considered as a minor mistake.

4.2.2 Grammatical but pragmatically inappropriate items

There are eight grammatically appropriate but pragmatically inappropriate items. The number of grammatical but pragmatically inappropriate items is equal to the number of pragmatically appropriate but ungrammatical items. The item numbers in the DCT are 1, 3, 7, 10, 11, 13, 16 and 20 (See Appendix A). The pragmatic problems in the scenarios are categorized in five groups which were adopted from the original DCT (Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei, 1998):

- (a) the lack of an explanation formula in a refusal addressed to an instructor,
- (b) a bare infinitive used for a request addressed to another student,
- (c) a denial of the offense in an apology addressed to a friend,
- (d) the use of aggravators in a suggestion without mitigators addressed to a teacher
- (e) the lack of an explanation or a forming a speaker-oriented request addressed to an instructor

Since pragmatics is not one of the components in the private university's preparatory school's curriculum, none of these pragmatic items are covered explicitly in B1+ level.

The data obtained from the data analysis displayed that five students referring to the one-tenth of the participants marked five items out of eight as the pragmatically inappropriate. The highest rating for pragmatic items differed from the highest rating of ungrammatical items. Although in the previous category there are two students who could not detect any of the grammatical problems, all of the participants managed to mark at least one pragmatically inappropriate item in this category.

The mean scores for individual pragmatically inappropriate items which were detected by all of the participants ranged from 0,24 to 0,78 out of 1. The detection mean score for all

pragmatic items is 4,58 out of 8. This means that students managed to detect 57,25% of grammatical but pragmatically inappropriate items.

The grammatical but pragmatically inappropriate item that participants have the highest achievement score referring to 0,78 is presented below:

Emma needs directions to the meeting room. She asks another student.

Emma: Hi.

Student: Hi.

Emma: Tell me how to go to the meeting room.

Was the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there was a problem, how bad do you think it was?

Not bad at all _____: _____: _____: _____ Very bad

Using a direct speech act as a request addressed to another student is the pragmatic problem here. 39 of 50 participants marked this scenario as inappropriate. It may be because they think it is apparently quite rude to use a bare infinitive while requesting directions from a stranger. The results of the second part in this scenario also support the idea that this problem is closer to “very bad”. It might be said that students did not have much difficulties finding the problems if they marked them “very bad” in the second part of the scenarios. On the other hand, when participants think the problems given in the scenario were not serious and marked them “not bad at all”, they could not detect them easily.

The grammatical but pragmatically inappropriate item that participants have the lowest achievement score referring to 0,24 is presented below:

John goes to see his teacher at his office. When he arrives, his teacher is busy.

John: (Knocks the door)

Teacher: Yes, come in.

John: Hello, Mr. Smith. Are you busy?

Teacher: Erm... Actually, yes I am. Could you come back later?

John: OK. I will come two hours later then.

Was the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there was a problem, how bad do you think it was?

Not bad at all _____: _____: _____: _____ Very bad

In this scenario, the pragmatic problem is forming a speaker-oriented way of speech towards a teacher who has a higher social status than the speaker. Only 12 participants out of 50 thought the underlined sentence was problematic. When the answers for the second part are analyzed, it is seen that most of the participants think this problem is closer to “not bad at all” rather than “very bad”.

4.2.3 Both grammatical and pragmatically appropriate items

The number of both grammatical and appropriate sentences is four which makes half of the other two categories because they function as control items. The numbers of these control items are 4, 6, 15 and 17 (See Appendix A). These items are chosen deliberately from native English speakers’ responses in the literature to ensure authentic scenarios that students can be exposed in real life (Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei, 1998).

The answers to the control items demonstrated that there was only one student who could not distinguish between any of the items with and without errors. However, almost half of the participants succeed in recognizing all of them. The mean scores of control items ranged from 0,68 to 0,88 out of 1. The mean score for all control items is 3,2 out of 4. It means that 75,55% of the both grammatical and pragmatically appropriate items could be detected by the participants.

This result shows that there is a difference between this and other previous categories. It is also seen that the majority of the students could distinguish between sentences with errors and those without.

Both grammatical and pragmatically appropriate item that participants have the highest achievement score referring to 0,88 is presented below:

Alison invites Emma to a party but Emma cannot come.

Alison: Emma, would you like to join us with the part tonight?

Emma: I am sorry. I would like to join you but I have a difficult vocabulary quiz tomorrow.

Was the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there was a problem, how bad do you think it was?

Not bad at all _____:_____:_____:_____ Very bad

Participants did not have difficulties to understand that this scenario is not problematic. It may be because they found the explanation clear and polite enough to explain the situation. In addition, they might have acquired the grammar points included in this scenario already.

Both grammatical and pragmatically appropriate item that participants have the lowest achievement score referring to 0,68 is presented below:

John's teacher wants to talk to John about his assignment. They try to arrange an appointment.

Teacher: John, we need to talk about your assignment soon.

John: Yeah, if tomorrow is good for you, I can come any time you want.

Was the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there was a problem, how bad do you think it was?

Not bad at all _____:_____:_____:_____ Very bad

Even though it is the item that participants could detect the less among control items, the decimal 0,68 shows that it is actually even higher than the highest scored item in pragmatically appropriate but ungrammatical section. It may be said that control items are not as challenging as previous two categories for the participants. Therefore, they were more successful detecting the control items compared to pragmatically appropriate but ungrammatical and grammatical but pragmatically inappropriate items.

4.3 Focus Group Interviews

This section presents the results of the second phase of the data collection procedure. The purpose in this section is to discuss the other research questions listed below:

2. What are their attitudes towards pragmatic errors?
3. What are their attitudes towards grammatical errors?

a) What are the attitudes of students with high pragmatic awareness towards pragmatic and grammatical awareness?

b) What are the attitudes of students with high grammatical awareness towards pragmatic and grammatical awareness?

Among 50 preparatory students who replied the written DCT, 26 were chosen for focus group interviews according to their performances in the Discourse Completion Task. While choosing the participants for focus groups, the personal information survey in the end of the DCT was used. Students did not write their names on that form, thus, instead of their names, their student ID numbers were used to assign them to the focus groups. The six participants who have the highest total achievement were assigned to the first focus group. This group included six

students who accomplished the DCT better than others for all three categories mentioned above. The second focus group included six participants who have the lowest total achievement in pragmatically appropriate but ungrammatical, grammatical but pragmatically inappropriate and both grammatical and pragmatically appropriate items. After these two focus groups created, the remaining participants who have the highest pragmatic and grammatical achievement are assigned in two different focus groups including six students each. Four focus group interviews were conducted to obtain further insights on the data.

The focus groups are presented in the table below:

Table 5.3

The number of participants in focus group interviews

Group name	Number of students
The participants who have the highest total achievement (Focus Group 1)	6
The participants who have the highest pragmatic achievement (Focus Group 2)	6
The participants who have the highest grammatical achievement (Focus Group 3)	6
The participants who have the lowest total achievement (Focus Group 4)	6

The reason why participants were grouped according to the scores of the DCT is that the ones that belong to the same group might have similar DCT achievement scores. Even if they are not informed about the grouping criteria, being in the same group with students having similar

performances may make them feel more self-confident to express themselves. In addition, it prevents some particular high achieved participants from speaking more than the ones who have lower scores in the Discourse Completion Task.

The participants were asked 10 semi-structured questions during the interviews. Questions were the same for all four groups. Yet, since the questions are not structured by the researcher, the flow of the interviews could change according to participant comment. The interviews were recorded with a tape recorder. The audio data obtained were transcribed after all interviews were completed. Two independent coders who are familiar with the study went over the whole data to specify their own themes provided by different students repetitiously. Later on, they compromised with four most common themes that participants mentioned frequently in order to explain how bad/serious they think the presented grammatical and pragmatic mistakes. The most frequently repeated themes are listed below:

1. Social Factors and Style of Speech
2. Grammar
3. Oral and Written Modalities
4. The Influence of ICT

As the questions were asked the students during the interviews, it was seen that these themes were commonly produced by students as a response to different questions. While students express their attitudes towards pragmatic mistakes, they tend to talk about various social factors and style of speech. On the other hand, when they express their attitudes towards grammatical mistakes, they mentioned different factors. This section is organized according to the themes and factors that participants referred during focus group interviews.

4.3.1 Social appropriateness and style of speech

Participants often emphasized the importance of the common themes mentioned in this section during focus group interviews when they express their attitudes towards pragmatic mistakes. They tend to emphasize the role of social appropriateness and style of speech when they referred to pragmatic mistakes. According to them, a problem in social appropriateness can make a mistake more serious than a grammatical mistake.

Although these students have not been taught pragmatics and social appropriateness during their preparatory school education, they referred to terms like; (a) social factors such as social distance, age and gender, (b) social status and (c) formality in order to explain the appropriate language use.

a) Social factors

The first element of social factors mentioned by the participants is social distance. Social distance is a dimension about the relationship between the participants in a dialogue (Holmes & Wilson, 2017).

Language use is influenced by social factors such as who uses it to whom. The addressee is an important factor creating a stylistic difference (Holmes & Wilson, 2017). People tend to use more standard and formal forms when they talk to a person they do not know very well. The better they know someone, the more casual their speech style becomes. Proper style of speaking is highly related to the relationship between the speaker and the addressee. Even though the message is the same, the style might be different while addressing to a friend and a teacher. Students mentioned this term without being aware of it is used in the literature. They related the term to who is talking to whom and the context or the setting that the conversation takes place.

Participants also stated that gender and age are also the factors which affect the social distance between the speaker and the listener.

Below some participants' comments on social distance are presented:

Excerpt 1: *“Arkadaşımla konuşurken kullandığım dil biraz daha argoya kaçıyor mesela ama sizinle konuşurken saygı çerçevesi içinde konuşmalıyım.”* (Participant 4, Focus Group 1)

“The language I use while talking to my friend is a little more slang, but I need to talk to you with respect. (Participant 4, Focus Group 1)

Excerpt 2: *“Bence iş ve sosyal hayat çerçevesinde farklı konuşma tarzları oluyor. Bu da samimiyete bağlı olarak değişiyor, arkadaşlarla argo kelimeler kullanılması gibi...”* (Participant 6, Focus Group 2)

“I think that there are different speaking styles at work and in social life. It depends on the sincerity like using slang words with friends...” (Participant 6, Focus Group 2)

Excerpt 3: *“Mesela daha önceden tanıdığımız bir insanın bizden büyük olması ve hiç tanımadığımız bir insanın bizden büyük olması çok farklı. Çünkü annemiz de bizden büyük ama annemle konuşurken emir kipi kullanabilirim. Tanımadığım biriyle kesinlikle bu şekilde konuşamam.”* (Participant 6, Focus Group 1)

“For example, talking to an older person that we have known and an older person who is a stranger are very different because our mothers are also older than us but I can use imperatives when I talk to her. I cannot talk to a stranger in this way.” (Participant 6, Focus Group 1)

According to these participants, using slang words is acceptable when in a conversation with a friend. However, they find it inappropriate in work place with a colleague or at school with a teacher. When participants were asked the significance of social appropriateness in a foreign language during focus group interviews, they clearly stated that they choose a distant and polite language to show respect when they communicate with a stranger as it is seen in their comments. However, if they are in a dialogue with a friend or a family member, they don't avoid using imperatives or even slang words. According to them, if this condition is not met, the mistake is more serious than a grammatical error.

Another social factor mentioned in focus group interviews is the age of the addressee. The way people talk to a child and an adult is not the same because speaking to a child may require some adjustments such as choosing simpler vocabulary and less complex grammatical constructions. Similarly, wording changes when the addressee is an elderly person. Again the vocabulary choice and grammatical structures used becomes simpler (Holmes & Wilson, 2017). Participants also shared similar ideas during focus group interviews. Some of them are provided below:

Excerpt 4: *“Büyüklerimizle konuşurken daha resmi, daha saygılı konuşurken, kendi yaşitlarımızla normal konuşma dilinde konuşuyoruz. Bu Türkçede de İngilizcede de böyle.”*
(Participant 5, Focus Group 1)

“While talking to elders, we speak more formal and more respectful but we talk to our peers normally. It is the same in both Turkish and English.” (Participant 5, Focus Group 1)

Excerpt 5: *“Mesela ben yaşıtlarımla konuştuğum dilde babamla konuşmam çünkü yanlış anlayabilir hatta bazı kelimeleri anlamayabilir. O yüzden konuştuğumuz insanın yaşına göre de konuşmamamızı adapte etmemiz gerekir.” (Participant 3, Focus Group 1)*

“For example, I can't talk to my father with the same language I speak with my peers because he may get it wrong or even misunderstand some words. That's why we need to adapt our speech to the age of the person we talked to.” (Participant 3, Focus Group 1)

Excerpt 6: *“Mesela ben benim yaşımdaya biriyle konuşmaya büyük ihtimalle “dude” diye başlarım ama yaşlı birini görürsem sanırım “sir” diye hitap ederim.” (Participant 1, Focus Group 2)*

“For example, I start the conversation with a peer by using the word ‘dude’ but if it is an older person I address him as ‘sir’.” (Participant 1, Focus Group 2)

As it is stated in the comments, participants support the idea of stylistic difference has a connection with the age of the addressee. They do not think that it is suitable to have the same wording with a person in their age and with an elderly. Thus, speech needs adjustments depending on the age of the addressee because it affects the social distance.

The final social factor that participants raised is the gender of the addressee. The wording and linguistic style changes when a male addresses to a woman as well as the topics of the conversation. The following statement taken from a focus group interview exemplifies their argument.

Excerpt 7: *“Erkeklerin arasında konuşulacak şeyler var kızların arasında konuşulacak şey var. Mesela bir erkeğin bir kıza hitabı ile bir erkeğe hitabı aynı değildir. Kullandığı dil farklıdır.” (Participant 2, Focus Group 1)*

“The conversation topics among boys and girls are not the same. For instance, the way a boy addresses a boy and a girl is not the same. The language he uses is different.” (Participant 2, Focus Group 1)

To sum up, their language preferences are affected by the relationship between the speaker and the listener, the age of the addressee as well as the gender of the addressee according to the participants’ answers to the questions related to the elements of social distance during focus group interviews.

b) Social status

Social status is also a dimension about the relationship between the participants in a conversation (Holmes & Wilson, 2017). If the conversation takes place between a low status and high status person, the linguistic preferences tend to be affected by the status difference. For instance, the low status person in the conversation might avoid using the first name to show respect to the high status person.

Below some provided participants’ comments on social status are presented:

Excerpt 8: *“Arkadaşlarımızla konuştuğumuz rahatlıkta bizden yüksek makamlı kişilerle konuşamıyoruz. Onlara saygılı şekilde konuşmamız gerekiyor.” (Participant 2, Focus Group 1)*

“We cannot talk the people with high authority in the comfort we talk to our friends. We must talk to them in a respectful way.” (Participant 2, Focus Group 1)

Excerpt 9: *“Önemli birisiyle konuşurken, mesela rektör gibi, dilbilgisine dikkat edilmeli ve uygun bir dil kullanılmalı.” (Participant 1, Focus Group 2)*

“When talking to someone important, such as a rector, grammar should be paid attention and a proper language should be used.” (Participant 1, Focus Group 2)

Excerpt 10: *“Konuşurken karşımdaki kişi hayatımda hangi sıfatla bulunuyor ona dikkat ederim, hocamsa farklı annemse farklı arkadaşımca farklı gibi...” (Participant 4, Focus Group 3)*

“While I am in a conversation, I adapt my speech according to the person. It changes when it is a teacher, my mother or a friend...” (Participant 4, Focus Group 3)

As seen from the excerpt given above, participants clearly declared that their linguistic choices depend on the person they talk to. They want to use a proper language, not only grammatical aspects but also social ones, while talking to educationally or occupationally higher-status person such as a university instructor or a rector. In every focus group, social status was mentioned as a significant factor affecting language choices as a response to the questions related the place of social appropriateness in a foreign language.

c) Formality

The formality scale (Holmes & Wilson, 2017) points the influence of social setting or interaction type in language choice. Solidarity and status relationships usually affect the degree of formality. On the other hand, there might be some exceptions. For instance; a close personal relationship between the speaker and listener does not always change the degree of the formality when the setting is quite formal such as an academic seminar. In other words, even though the speaker and the listener have close social relationships, the context accommodates their language. Eventually they act more formal because of the setting and context.

Below some provided participants' comments on formality are presented:

Excerpt 11: *“Okulda bir öğretmen ile konuştuğumuz zaman akademik bir dilde konuşuyor olabiliriz.”* (Participant 3, Focus Group 4)

“When we speak to a teacher at school, we may be speaking in an academic language.”
(Participant 3, Focus Group 4)

Excerpt 12: *“Melisa ile yaptığım dedikoduyu bir öğretmenimle yapamam, sonuçta sadece okul ortamında görüşüyoruz.”* (Participant 4, Focus Group 1)

“I cannot gossip with one my teachers like I do with Melisa. We only meet my teachers at school .” (Participant 4, Focus Group 1)

Excerpt 13: *“Günlük hayat ile iş hayatını birbirinden ayırıyoruz, ikisi farklı ortamlarda olduğu için konuştuğumuz dil de farklı oluyor.”* (Participant 3, Focus Group 2)

“We distinguish between daily life and business life, the settings are different, so we speak different languages.” (Participant 3, Focus Group 2)

Participant comments indicated that they adapt the language they use according to the social setting of the dialogue. One of the underlying reasons why they change their languages while speaking with their teachers is the fact that they are in school context. Similarly, their linguistic choices differ in social life and business life. They think more formal settings such as a work place requires a more official language. Whereas they were ranking the factors affecting their language preferences during focus group interviews, they emphasized the place of formality recurrently.

4.3.2 Grammar

During focus group interviews, participants were asked a question about the importance of grammatical competence in language learning. They stated their ideas on to what extent they think grammatical knowledge is fundamental in second language learning. In addition, another question leded participants to express their attitudes towards grammatical mistakes and to compare the place of grammatical awareness and pragmatic awareness in language learning. The analysis of focus group interviews indicated that participants considered grammatical competence as a vital factor in second language learning. Whereas some of them think it is essential and the most important element of second language learning, some believe that grammatical awareness is not as outstanding as pragmatic awareness.

The comments of participants who have the highest grammatical achievement in Discourse Completion Task, Focus Group 3, reflect in their attitudes obtained in focus group interviews. They have distinctive ideas on how important grammatical awareness with and without comparing it with pragmatic awareness. Below a conversation from focus group interviews supporting the idea of grammatical knowledge is the fundamental of second language learning is illustrated:

Excerpt 14:

Participant 2, Focus Group 3: “Gramer bilmedikten sonra sosyal uygunluğa da uyamazsın ki.”

Participant 1, Focus Group 3: “Evet, sosyal olarak uygun olman bir şey kazandırmamış olacak.”

Participant 4, Focus Group 3: “ Ama bence sağlıklı bir iletişim kurulur.”

Participant 2, Focus Group 3: "If you don't know grammar, you can't be socially appropriate."

Participant 1, Focus Group 3: "Yes, it won't mean anything even if you are socially appropriate."

Participant 4, Focus Group 3: "But I think it becomes an unhealthy communication."

As it can be inferred from the dialogue above, even if there are some opposing attitudes towards pragmatic and grammatical competence, this group of participants clearly thinks that pragmatic knowledge can be built on grammatical knowledge. They point out the significance of basic grammatical knowledge to be able to establish a dialogue in a foreign language. Additionally, they see grammatical awareness as the prerequisite for pragmatic awareness. As it is seen in the dialogue, having pragmatic awareness with the absence of grammatical awareness is insufficient in their point of view.

Moreover, some of the participants think that focusing on grammar overly affect their fluency in second language as well as their inner motivation to speak English. Since they believe grammatical awareness is the most essential factor in the regard of using English, they pay attention to the grammatical correctness too much. Eventually, they end up losing their chain of thoughts. Some comments on this respect are provided below:

Excerpt 15: *"Benim İngilizce konuşurken önce grameri kafamda düşünüp, sonra sormam lazım. İlk başta o şekilde başlıyorum ama sonra konuşurken kendim hatamı fark edersem kafamda kopukluk oluyor, devam edemiyorum konuşmaya."* (Participant 4, Focus Group 1)

“While I am speaking English, I first think about the correct grammar, I form the sentence in my mind, then I start speaking. However, if I notice my mistakes while I am speaking, I have disconnection in my mind and I cannot continue speaking.” (Participant 4, Focus Group 1)

Excerpt 16: *“Gramere daha çok dikkat ediyorum sanki. Aslında etmemem gerektiğini düşünüyorum bu kadar fazla akıcılığı bozuyor çünkü ama hala o şekildeyim, bunu tam çözebilmiş değilim.” (Participant 1, Focus Group 3)*

“I guess I pay too much attention to grammar. I actually think I shouldn't do that because it affects fluency in a bad way but I can't help but still do that.” (Participant 1, Focus Group 3)

As it is seen here, these participants state that paying attention to grammatical correctness excessively while producing sentences in English might turn into a disadvantage. It sometimes affects their fluency in a negative way and causes them to name grammatical correctness as a problem. They think they overthink about grammatical correctness while speaking and it affects their fluency in a negative way. With the help of further questions about the underlying reason behind this problem, participants stated that they blame the Turkish education system because of being overly grammatical rules based. They experienced so much exposure to grammar rules during their English learning process that they think grammatical mistakes cannot be tolerated.

On the other hand, there are some participants who think pragmatic awareness steps forward when it is compared to grammatical awareness. According to their thoughts, grammatical awareness needs to be along with pragmatic awareness to function in real conversations. They point out the importance of being both socially appropriate and fluent as much as being grammatically correct in an on-going conversation. Comments supporting this presented below:

Excerpt 17: *“Birine reported speech kullanarak bir şey ifade etmem gereken durumlar tabii ki oluyor ama bunu ne kadar yapıyorum? Bu yapıyı kullanmam gerektiğinde neyi reportladığımı arkadaşım anlıyor ama ben devam eden bir konuşmada akıcı konuşmam gerektiği için acaba burada back-shifting yapmam gerekiyor mu diye düşünmüyorum. Herkesle beraber devam eden bir sohbetin içindeyim çünkü. Türkçede ben düşünüyorum muyum burada dönüşlü fiil kullandım ama aslında dolaylı tümleç kullanmalıydım diye?”* (Participant 1, Focus Group 1)

“Of course there are some situations that I need to express myself by using ‘reported speech’ but how many times do I do that? When I have to use this grammatical structure, my friend understands the thing I report. However, I have to be fluent during an ongoing conversation so I cannot think if I need back-shifting here or not. There are also other speakers in that ongoing conversation. When I speak English, do I think if I need to use reflexive verbs or indirect object instead?” (Participant 1, Focus Group 1)

Excerpt 18: *“Diyelim gramer biliyorum ve kendimden üst mertebede biriyle konuşuyorum. Yanlış bir kelime seçtim, yanlış şekilde seslendim adam beni dinlemezse kullandığım doğru gramer yapısı çöpe gider.”* (Participant 4, Focus Group 4)

“Let’s say I know the proper grammatical structure and I am in a conversation with a person having a higher status. I chose an inappropriate word or addressed him/her inappropriately... If he didn’t listen to me, that proper grammatical structure becomes useless.” (Participant 4, Focus Group 4)

These participants value grammatical knowledge only when it is combined with pragmatic knowledge. Even if they use complex grammar structures correctly, it is not enough to be considered as competent as long as they are not pragmatically appropriate or fluent in a

continuing dialogue. Moreover, the first participant's comment in focus group 1 proves that the participants have enough grammatical knowledge to differ grammatical and pragmatic awareness. These students have been taught "reported speech back-shifting" which is a demanding grammar topic. It is also a proof showing this particular participant's competence to combine what has been taught in class and this study.

Furthermore, there is a group of participants who believes pragmatic awareness is apparently more functional compared to grammatical awareness in real life language use. Supportive comments on this regard are provided below:

Excerpt 19: *"Gramerin günlük hayatta çok gerekli olduğunu düşünmüyorum; çünkü bana kalırsa yabancı dizileri incelediğiniz zaman, insanlar tamamen gramere uyup konuşmuyorlar."* (Participant 3, Focus Group 4)

"I don't think grammar is necessary in daily life conversations because when we look at TV series in English, people don't really follow grammar rules all the time." (Participant 3, Focus Group 4)

Excerpt 20: *"Ben de grammeri pek umursamam herhalde o an acil bir durumdayken. Zaten karşı tarafın ana dili İngilizceyse her türlü bizi anlayacak. Türkiye'ye gelen yabancılar bir kelime söylüyor biz cümleyi anlıyoruz aşağı yukarı."* (Participant 4, Focus Group 4)

"When I am in a hurry, I don't think that I really care about grammar rules. If the listener's native language is English, he/she will understand us anyway. We almost understand what foreign visitors mean with one Turkish word they say." (Participant 4, Focus Group 4)

Based on the participants' responses to the questions related to the importance of grammatical knowledge in a foreign language, it can be inferred that the participants pushing grammatical knowledge into the background belong to Focus Group 4 which consists of the participants who have the lowest total achievement in the Discourse Completion Task. The underlying reason behind this consequence might be their low achievement in grammar tests. Even if they were not informed how they were grouped for the interviews, since they do not perform as well as the other groups in English tests, they may end up neglecting the importance of grammatical competence in second language learning. However, for more accurate inferences, further research needs to be conducted.

There were also some participants mentioning the influence of oral and written modalities of language use while commenting on the place of grammatical and pragmatic awareness in second language. Therefore, the next section clarifies the effect of oral and written modalities.

4.3.3 Oral and written modalities

In the focus groups, when participants make interpretations on pragmatic and grammatical knowledge, they mentioned the distinction between speaking and writing. This distinction has been explained in detail in the literature review section. On the basis of this distinction, a number of participants stated that written language requires more formal and complex structures. Yet, spoken language might compensate being more informal even if it is an academic context. Correspondingly, they believe that oral communication tolerates grammatical problems more than written. A number of comments providing support to this respect are presented below:

Excerpt 21: *“Konuşurken bence gramer çok önemli değil.” (Participant 4, Focus Group 2)*

“I don't think grammar is important in oral communication.” (Participant 4, Focus Group 2)

Excerpt 22: *“Yazılı sınav gibi etkinliklerde gramer önemli tabii ama konuşmalarda, örneğin yurt dışından biriyle konuşurken önemli değil gibi geliyor bana.” (Participant 5, Focus Group 2)*

“Of course grammar is important in written exams but in oral communication, in a conversation with a foreigner, I don’t think is significant.” (Participant 5, Focus Group 2)

Excerpt 23: *“Dilbilgisi kurallarına ve soru işaretine, ünleme, noktaya dikkat ederek yazdığımız metni açık hale getirmeliyiz çünkü konuşurken o hissi verebiliriz ama yazarken soru işareti olmadan karşı tarafın soru sorduğumuzu anlamasını bekleyemeyiz.” (Participant 3, Focus Group 4)*

“We have to clarify a text we wrote with correct use of the grammatical structures, question marks, exclamation marks and full stops because the reader cannot understand if it is a question without a question mark in the end in a written text. However, in a spoken conversation, we can give that impression without punctuation marks.” (Participant 3, Focus Group 4)

Even though, the focus group questions did not include any direct instruction about the difference between speaking and writing, these remarks display that participants associate written language with formality accompanying with high level of grammatical competence. They tend to use more complex structures when they produce a written format. On the other side, they conceive spoken language as more informal and moderate to grammatical problems. They feel more comfortable making grammar mistakes in a spoken conversation. Thus, participants think that pragmatic knowledge is more important in spoken interactions.

4.3.4 The influence of ICT

During focus group interviews, participants mentioned the influence of ICT (Information and Communication Technologies) such as using the Web and social media in English as well as watching soap operas and TV shows in English while learning English. Almost all participants talked about the positive effects of ICT texts such as TV series that they have watched. As it is seen in their following comments, participants emphasized the effect on both pragmatic and grammatical awareness. Their relevant comments are listed below:

Excerpt 24: *“Gramer geliyor dizilerden ya... Mesela “the more the more” kalıbı var ya, ben onu şarkılardan öğrendim. Hocam onu bana 3 kere anlattı, kesinlikle anlayamadım ama şarkılardan öğrendim ve şimdi her yerde kullanıyorum.” (Participant 1, Focus Group 1)*

“We can learn grammar from TV series. For example, I learnt the grammar structure ‘the more the more’ from songs. My teacher explained it to me in the class 3 times but I couldn’t understand it. I learnt it from songs and now I often use it.” (Participant 1, Focus Group 1)

Excerpt 25: *“Öğrenmediğiniz bir gramer varsa ve bunu ilk defa dizide duyduysanız zaten dikkatinizi çekiyor. Kendi kendinize acaba bunun doğru kullanımı nasıl diye araştırıyorsunuz.” (Participant 6, Focus Group 3)*

“When you see a grammatical structure that you don’t know in a TV show, it takes your attention. You search for learning the correct usage of it.” (Participant 6, Focus Group 3)

Excerpt 26: *“Mesela dağıttığınız anketteki ‘that’s a great’ ile ‘that’s great’ ayrımını gramer bilgimle değil de dizilerden edindiğim farkındalıkla bu böyle kullanılmıyor diye düşünerek yapabiliyorum.” (Participant 4, Focus Group 2)*

“In the survey that you distributed, I could see the difference between ‘that’s a great’ and ‘that’s great’ because of the awareness that I have thanks to TV series. Not because of my grammar knowledge...” (Participant 4, Focus Group 2)

Excerpt 27: *“Tabii orada insanların yaptıkları roller üzerinden bir şeyler kapabiliyoruz. Hayattan parçalar olabiliyor filmlerin içinde.” (Participant 2, Focus Group 1)*

“Sure we can learn stuff thanks to the roles of the actors. There might be parts from real life in movies.” (Participant 2, Focus Group 1)

In these comments, participants clearly stated the contribution of songs and TV series in English to their language learning. The first comment even shows that sometimes students learn from the ICT texts (such as the digital texts on the Internet) better than they do in the class. It may be because they choose what to watch or which songs to listen according to their own interests so they treat it as a free time activity rather than a part of English learning process. It is also very fulfilling to see that “participant 4 in focus group 1” relates the DCT to focus group interviews. What is more, the last comment proves that participants think that they improve their pragmatic awareness thanks to TV series. Since they mostly see real life based and authentic scenes in these shows, they develop their awareness on pragmatic awareness.

In addition to previous comments, one outstanding comment is worth to be shared. One of the participants stated the significance of the grammatical knowledge of the foreign language before acquiring some words through the Internet. In other words, he/she thinks that one must have some basic grammatical awareness to benefit from watching videos or soap operas in English. He/She also gives a real life example from a currently popular TV series which shows that participants link their life and this study. The comment is presented below:

Excerpt 28: *“Bence gramer bilmeden, farkındalık oluşmadan yabancı dizi izleyince İngilizceye katkısı olmuyor. Şu an İspanyolca ‘La Casa De Papel’i herkes izliyor. Bunu izlerken kimse İngilizce bir dizi izlerken öğrendiklerini öğrenemez. İngilizce bir dizide bu neydi diye kendinde araştırıp bakabiliyorsun ama İspanyolcayı fark bile etmezsin izlerken.”* (Participant 4, Focus Group 4)

“I don’t think we can improve our English when we watch TV series without knowing and being aware of the grammatical rules. Nowadays, everyone is watching the TV show ‘La Casa De Papel’. No one can benefit from it as much as they can from English TV series. While watching English TV series, you search for the things you first come across and learn more. However, when watching something in Spanish, you don’t even notice them.” (Participant 4, Focus Group 4)

4.4 Summary of Findings

The findings of the study displayed that participants were able to notice pragmatic problems better than grammatical ones in the DCT. 50 students took the DCT as the first phase of data collection. The following tables summarize the item based results of DCT.

Table 5.2

The item based results of the DCT

	The lowest scored item in DCT out of 1	The highest scored item in DCT out of 1
Pragmatically appropriate but ungrammatical items	0,28	0,66
Grammatical but pragmatically inappropriate items	0,24	0,78

Both grammatical and pragmatically appropriate items	0,68	0,88
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There were three different item categories in the Discourse Completion Task. The first category comprised of pragmatically appropriate but ungrammatical items. When the average of the correct answers was calculated, it was seen that the lowest scored pragmatically appropriate but ungrammatical item was 0,28 out of 1. Additionally, the highest scored pragmatically appropriate but ungrammatical items was 0,66 out of 1. The second category consisted of grammatical but pragmatically inappropriate items. The average scores showed that the lowest scored grammatical but pragmatically inappropriate item was 0,24 out of 1. What is more, the highest scored grammatical but pragmatically inappropriate item was 0.78 out of 1. The third category which consisted of control items had both grammatical and pragmatically appropriate items. The numerical results displayed that the lowest scored item was 0,68 while the highest scored was 0,88 out of 1. The difference between the lowest and highest scored items in the third category is less than other two categories. Also, even the lowest scored item in the third category was discriminated better than the highest scored items in the other categories. These prove that the control items worked because participants could discriminate the items with and without mistakes. In addition to findings attained from the first table, second table displays the number of the correctly detected items in each category as well as the percentages. It is presented below.

Table 4.2

The numbers and percentages of correctly detected items in the DCT

	The number of the correctly detected items	The percentage of the correctly detected items
8 pragmatically appropriate but ungrammatical items	3,5	43,75%
8 grammatical but pragmatically inappropriate items	4,8	57,25%
4 both grammatical and pragmatically appropriate items	3,2	75,55%

This table includes very crucial findings because these findings not only directed the rest of the data collection process but also answered the first research question. It shows that all 50 participants could detected 3,5 of 8 pragmatically appropriate but ungrammatical items while they could identify 4,8 of 8 grammatical but pragmatically inappropriate items. In other words, participants were able to detect pragmatically inappropriate items more easily than ungrammatical ones. It might be said that according to the results of the DCT, participants' pragmatic awareness is higher than their grammatical awareness which was an unexpected finding based on previous literature. Since these students were not taught pragmatics explicitly but had grammar focused type of lessons, their grammatical awareness was expected to be higher. However, percentages showed that 57,25% of the pragmatically inappropriate items were noticed by participants while only 43,75% of the ungrammatical items were identified. Furthermore, participants could distinguish 3,2 of the 4 both grammatical and pragmatically appropriate items which refers to 75,55% of those 4 items. This proves the effectiveness of the control items.

5. DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

In this study, pragmatic and grammatical awareness levels of preparatory school students were investigated through a Discourse Completion Task including 20 scenarios based on the speech act of apology and request. In the beginning of the research, the participants were chosen among the highest level learners of the private university in 2017-2018 academic year. Since the study took place in the first module of fall term, B2 level was not offered in the private university that is the setting of this study. For this reason, participants were chosen among B1+ level. Next, the DCT was adapted by taking into consideration the level and prior knowledge of the English preparatory school students. The results of the DCT were analyzed to determine the focus group participants. According to participants' answers in the DCT, half of them were chosen to put in four different focus groups. The participants commented on 10 questions directed to each of them at the same time in each focus group. The questions were designed to understand their perceptions on pragmatic and grammatical awareness and their deeper thoughts about their foreign language learning process. After the transcription of the interviews was completed, the collected data were coded independently by two researchers who are familiar with the present study. The most common terms produced by the participants during focus group interviews were selected and their comments were used to analyze the data.

5.2 Summary of the findings

Since the Discourse Completion Task is the first phase of data collection process, the summary of its results must be reviewed first. The DCT shows that participants could manage to detect grammatical but pragmatically inappropriate items more easily than pragmatically

appropriate but ungrammatical ones. Although students did not experience any explicit pragmatic learning as a part of preparatory school, they noticed more pragmatic mistakes than grammatical ones. Furthermore, control items are the ones that participants were the most successful at among these three categories. This means that participants were able to distinguish the scenarios with problems from those without problems.

In addition to the DCT results, on the basis of focus group interviews' results, it might be said that the participants have two opposing attitudes towards grammatical and pragmatic knowledge. The first group thinks that mistakes resulting from inappropriate uses of language are more serious and unacceptable. They think social distance, social status and formality are very essential factors in foreign language learning. They also highlighted the impact of solidarity, age and gender on pragmatic knowledge. This group mainly consisted of participants whose pragmatic awareness is higher than grammatical awareness. Therefore, it may be said that participants with high pragmatic awareness according to the DCT consider pragmatic violations more serious than grammatical mistakes.

On the contrary, second participant group does not deny the role of pragmatic knowledge in language competence. However, they believe that pragmatic knowledge can be built on grammatical knowledge. Namely, they think grammatical knowledge is requisite for and basis of language competence. According to their attitudes, without acquiring enough grammatical knowledge, one cannot perform an appropriate language. They claim that pragmatic awareness can only occur when the learners have grammatical knowledge as basis. This group of participants mostly has high grammatical awareness according to the DCT. This means participants with high grammatical awareness think that grammatical mistakes are more serious than pragmatic mistakes.

To sum up, as an answer to the first research question, the DCT demonstrated that the participants' pragmatic awareness was higher than their grammatical awareness even if they were never taught pragmatics explicitly. The results of Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei's study (1998) displayed different results. Since the participant groups were not similar, it is difficult to say the results of these two studies are opposite. However, it can be said that they are not very correlated. In their study, ESL learners showed higher degree of pragmatic awareness compared to EFL learners. The reason stated for this result was lack of pragmatic instruction. Since the first phase of data collection which is DCT gave different results with Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei's study (1998), the focus group interviews were design to see the reasons of this difference.

After this result was obtained, the focus groups were created accordingly to answer the second, third, fourth and fifth research questions. The questions were formed to be certain about the result of DCT and understand participants' perceptions and thoughts about grammatical and pragmatic awareness. As replies to different questions, participants mentioned 4 themes repetitively in each group. The first theme was social factors and style of speech. They stated that social distance, social status and formality were factors affecting their language preferences. Moreover, their comments demonstrated that the relationship between the addressee and addresser, as well as the age and gender of the addressee are determiners to adjust their language. The second theme was about grammar. Although there are some disagreements about the role of grammar in second language learning, grammatical knowledge does not take the first place in foreign language proficiency according to the majority. Some even think that the excessive focus on grammar turns into a disadvantage because it has a negative impact on the fluency and self-confidence to speak English. The third theme was related to oral and written modalities. Participants clearly expressed the language difference between oral and written forms. Whereas

they associated oral modalities with tolerance to mistakes, they believe written forms are intolerant to wrong language preferences especially on grammar. The last theme provided by participants was the influence of information and communication technologies. Since the Internet is going more and more into young people's lives every day, its effect is undeniable. None of the participants denied the positive influence of the web to their second language learning process. They commented on the benefits of TV series, social networking sites, YouTube, Ted Talks and song that they are exposed to consciously or unconsciously. The ICT improves not only their grammatical but also pragmatic knowledge.

Lastly, the answers for sub research questions were obtained from different focus groups. The participants with highest total achievement contributed to answer them because this group had participants with both high grammatical and pragmatic awareness. The participants with high pragmatic awareness also helped to answer the first sub research question. They explicitly stated that grammatical errors were minor compared to pragmatic ones. They think pragmatic errors are more vital because they may lead the conversation collapse while grammatical errors might be tolerated as long as they do not change the meaning. To answer the second sub research question, the comments of both participants with highest total achievement and grammatical awareness were used. Here, some discrepancies occurred. While some participants think grammatical knowledge is essential for language proficiency, some think it is not the most important component of it. Therefore, they stated that pragmatic knowledge can only be built on grammatical knowledge otherwise it does not help in real life situations. The influence of oral and written modalities has been argued to provide answer to this question. Participants relate the written modalities with high level of grammatical knowledge. Thus, they think one must be proficient in grammar on a written task. On the other hand, they think pragmatic knowledge is

more significant than grammatical knowledge in a spoken conversation. In addition, they think grammar mistakes are tolerable in speaking because of the contribution of other factors like context. They believed that even though the speaker has some grammar mistakes, listener is able to tolerate it with the help of context. Yet, pragmatic mistake may cause more serious misunderstandings in a spoken communication.

All in all, the results of present study are not consistent with Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei's study (1998). The most reasonable explanation for this might be the effect of ICT texts such as English TV series. Participants in this study can reach them very easily whereas the other participant group did not have many opportunities. Additionally, those ICT texts are full of pragmatic information. Thus, students could detect pragmatic problems even though they did not experience any explicit pragmatic instructions.

5.3 Conclusion

As it was stated in Literature Review section, this study used the same Discourse Completion (DCT) task used in Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei's (1998) study. Even though there are many common aspects in both studies, the results were not very similar because of the differences between the participants' profiles and background in addition to the year that the DCT was applied. First of all, the participants in their study were from both EFL and ESL contexts while the participants of this study only included Turkish ESL speakers of English. Their study compared the pragmatic and grammatical awareness of ESL learners in the U.S, EFL learners in Hungary, teachers in the U.S and Hungary and EFL speakers in Italy. Thus, the results showed that even the EFL learners with high grammatical awareness did not have a corresponding level of pragmatic awareness. However, the participants displayed higher level of

pragmatic awareness than grammatical awareness in the present study although they were neither taught pragmatics explicitly nor being an ESL context. The reason behind this consequence is the influence of ICT and the Internet. Current students do not really need the ESL context to acquire pragmatic information as the students 20 years ago. They also clearly stated that ICT texts provide them enough opportunity to improve their pragmatic knowledge and awareness. The first study took place twenty years ago. Therefore, the participants had different backgrounds compared to today's English language learners.

5.4 Limitations

Sample of this research can be thought as the main limitation of this study because it only has a limited number of participants. 50 students may not be enough to generalize the results to all university but it is transferable to the different contexts. Another limitation is that all of the participants study in the same private university in Istanbul, Turkey thus the variety of students' background is restricted. Moreover, all students have similar competency in the target language. Namely, they have similar results in the placement exam prepared by testing office of the private university that the study took place. Therefore, generalizing the results to different levels might be misleading because the participants have more or less the same level of competency in English. Lastly, the data collection procedure could be considered as another limitation because Discourse Completion Task is presented in a written format while students' communicative abilities are the main concern. Thus, the findings of this research might not be enough to foresee the participants' actual pragmatic awareness in an oral conversation in English.

5.5 Recommendations for Future Research

This study revealed an opposite result to the study of Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei (1998) which is the main inspiration to administer the DCT. The 15 years between the studies is the possible reason of this contrast. With the development of technology, the access to target language which is full of pragmatic information is faster and easier. This made it possible to be exposed to authentic language more than in the past. However, another application of this study may ensure the results if it is applied to a larger population. Also, as it is mentioned in the limitations, all of the participants have more or less the same level of proficiency in English. Thus, the impact of the proficiency level could not be tested in this study. Further studies may be about it. Finally, in this study only the speech acts of apology and request were tested. A similar study with a wider range of speech acts might deepen the study.

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Appendix A: Discourse Completion Task

Instructions and Scenarios

Instructions

Thank you for helping us with our study. In the scenarios below, you are going to see Emma and John talking to their teachers and classmates. Their English will sometimes be correct but sometimes there will be a problem. Since it is a questionnaire, any type of problem is possible. Your task is to decide how well Emma and John use English in different conversations. You will always evaluate the underlined sentence. After you read the conversations, you will decide if there is a problem or not and then you will mark your answer sheet.

Below you will see an example scenario:

Emma: Hello, John.

John: Goodbye, Emma.

Was the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there was a problem, how bad do you think it was?

Not bad at all _____:_____:_____ Very bad

Obviously, there is a problem with John's answer. Thus, circle the answer "No". Then, you decide how big the problem is. Put an X somewhere on the line between *not bad at all* and *very bad*. For a small mistake, mark the second or third slot (depending on your thoughts); for a serious mistake, mark the last slot.

Please keep in mind that it is not an exam. We are interested in your thoughts. Do not spend a lot of time thinking about what answer you should provide; instead, please respond as naturally as possible. You have 15 minutes to finish this questionnaire.

If you have a question, please ask before you start the task.

Scenarios

(Grammatical errors are signified by *, pragmatic problems are signified by #, no marking for control items)

(The type of the speech acts are provided in each scenario)

1. The teacher asks John to help planning the class trip. (Refusal)

Teacher: We will go by bus and I need someone to check the bus times for us. John, you live near the bus station. Could you check that on the way home tonight?

John: #No, I can't tonight.

Was the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there was a problem, how bad do you think it was?

Not bad at all ____:____:____:____ Very bad

2. John and Tim are classmates. Tim invites John to a party, but John cannot come. (Refusal)

Tim: John, would you like to join us with the part tonight?

John: *I'm sorry, I cannot. I am so tired. I don't sleep well last night.

Was the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there was a problem, how bad do you think it was?

Not bad at all ____:____:____:____ Very bad

3. John goes to canteen to buy some snacks. (Request)

Staff: How can I help you?

John: #Would you be so kind as to give me a sandwich and apple juice please?

Was the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there was a problem, how bad do you think it was?

Not bad at all _____:_____:_____:_____ Very bad

4. Tim is going to library to study for the midterm exam. John asks him to study together. (Suggestion)

Tim: Well, see you tomorrow. I will be in the library to study for the midterm exam.

John: Oh, I will also study for the exam. How about studying together?

Was the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there was a problem, how bad do you think it was?

Not bad at all _____:_____:_____:_____ Very bad

5. John is talking to his teacher. The conversation is about to finish. (Suggestion)

Teacher: Well, I think it is all I can do for you at the moment.

John: *That's a great. Thank you for your help.

Was the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there was a problem, how bad do you think it was?

Not bad at all _____:_____:_____:_____ Very bad

6. Emma is talking to her teacher in his office when she breaks a glass cup. (Apology)

Emma: (She breaks the glass cup) Oh no! I am so sorry. Let me clean the glass pieces.

Was the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there was a problem, how bad do you think it was?

Not bad at all _____:_____:_____:_____ Very bad

7. It is Emma's speaking presentation day but she is not ready. (Refusal)

Teacher: Yes, Emma. It is your turn to make your presentation.

Emma: #I cannot do it today. I will do it next week.

Was the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there was a problem, how bad do you think it was?

Not bad at all ____:____:____:____ Very bad

8. Emma goes to canteen to buy some snacks. (Suggestion)

Staff: How can I help you?

Emma: *Two cup of coffee please.

Was the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there was a problem, how bad do you think it was?

Not bad at all ____:____:____:____ Very bad

9. Emma has borrowed a book from a classmate, Alison. Alison needs the book back but Emma has forgotten to return it.

Alison: Emma, do you have the book I gave you two days ago? I need it back. (Refusal)

Emma: *Oh, I am so sorry but I did not brought it today. I was late this morning.

Was the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there was a problem, how bad do you think it was?

Not bad at all ____:____:____:____ Very bad

10. Emma needs directions to the meeting room. She asks another student. (Request)

Emma: Hi.

Student: Hi.

Emma: #Tell me how to go to the meeting room.

Was the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there was a problem, how bad do you think it was?

Not bad at all ____:____:____:____ Very bad

11. John is going to Tim's house. He is very late. (Apology)

John: Hi.

Tim: Hi John. I have been waiting for almost an hour for you. We were going to meet at 5.

John: #I had some things to do. And anyway, what is the problem? We don't have to hurry anywhere.

Was the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there was a problem, how bad do you think it was?

Not bad at all ____:____:____:____ Very bad

12. John and Tim meet after class. They want to do something after school. (Suggestion)

Tim: Hey, I have got 2 hours before I go home. What shall we do?

John: *Let's to go to cinema.

Was the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there was a problem, how bad do you think it was?

Not bad at all ____:____:____:____ Very bad

13. John goes to see his teacher at his office. When he arrives, his teacher is busy.
(Suggestion)

John: (Knocks the door)

Teacher: Yes, come in.

John: Hello, Mr. Smith. Are you busy?

Teacher: Erm... Actually, yes I am. Could you come back later?

John: #OK. I will come two hours later then.

Was the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there was a problem, how bad do you think it was?

Not bad at all ____:____:____:____ Very bad

14. John asks his friend Tim for his earphones. (Request)

John: Tim?

Tim: Yes?

John: *Can I borrow your earphones for the weekend if you not need them?

Was the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there was a problem, how bad do you think it was?

Not bad at all ____:____:____:____ Very bad

15. John's teacher wants to talk to John about his assignment. They try to arrange an appointment. (Suggestion)

Teacher: John, we need to talk about your assignment soon.

John: Yeah, if tomorrow is good for you, I can come any time you want.

Was the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there was a problem, how bad do you think it was?

Not bad at all ____:____:____:____ Very bad

16. Emma asks her teacher to fill in a questionnaire. She knocks on the office door. (Request)

Emma: (knocks the door)

Teacher: Yes, come in.

Emma: #Hello. I am Emma Miller. I need you to fill in this questionnaire for me.

Was the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there was a problem, how bad do you think it was?

Not bad at all _____:_____:_____:_____ Very bad

17. Alison invites Emma to a party but Emma cannot come. (Refusal)

Alison: Emma, would you like to join us with the part tonight?

Emma: I am sorry. I would like to join you but I have a difficult vocabulary quiz tomorrow.

Was the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there was a problem, how bad do you think it was?

Not bad at all _____:_____:_____:_____ Very bad

18. Emma needs the directions to the meeting room. She asks another student. (Request)

Emma: *Excuse me, how I can go to the meeting room?

Was the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there was a problem, how bad do you think it was?

Not bad at all _____:_____:_____:_____ Very bad

19. Emma has borrowed a book from a classmate, Alison. Alison needs the book back but Emma has forgotten to return it. (Suggestion)

Alison: Emma, do you have the book I gave you two days ago? I need it back.

Emma: *Oh, I am so sorry, I totally forgot. Can I bringing it back to you tomorrow?

Was the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there was a problem, how bad do you think it was?

Not bad at all _____:_____:_____:_____ Very bad

20. Emma meets her classmate, Alison, after class. They want to go somewhere. (Suggestion)

Emma: Alison, are you busy after school?

Alison: No, I have already finished the homework for tomorrow.

Emma: #Then I say we go to eat pizza. OK?

Was the last part appropriate/correct? Yes No

If there was a problem, how bad do you think it was?

Not bad at all _____:_____:_____ Very bad



Appendix B: Personal Information Form

Student ID Number:.....- The level of English:.....

Date:.....

Class:.....

Age:.....

Gender:

E-mail address:

1. What is your mother tongue? Do you speak any other language at home with your family other than Turkish? If so, which language?

2. What language(s) can you speak other than your mother tongue?

3. What is the name of your high school?

4. Where and when did you learn English?

5. Have you ever been abroad? Where and how long have you stayed?

6. While you are studying English, which skills did you focus more? (Ex: speaking, listening, writing, reading or grammar)

7. How often, with whom and for which purposes do you speak and write in English?

8. Do you think you are proficient in English?

Yes No Not sure

Appendix C: Kişisel bilgi formu

Öğrenci No:.....- İngilizce hazırlık seviyesi:

Tarih:.....

Sınıf:.....

Yaş:.....

Cinsiyet:

Eposta adresi:

1. Anadiliniz nedir? Türkçe dışında evde/ ailenizle konuştuğunuz bir dil var mı? Varsa hangisi?

2. Anadiliniz dışında çok iyi bildiğiniz diğer dil(ler) hangisidir?

3. Mezun olduğunuz lise? _____

4. İngilizceyi nerede ve ne zaman öğrendiniz?

5. Yurtdışı deneyiminiz var mı? neresi ve ne kadar kaldınız?

6. İngilizcenizi geliştirirken hangi konu veya konulara yoğunlaştınız (örn. gramer, kelime bilgisi, yazma, okuma, konuşma, çeviri)?

7. Ne sıklıkta, kimlerle ve hangi amaçla İngilizce konuşup yazıyorsunuz?

8. Kendinizi İngilizce’de yeterli buluyor musunuz?

Evet Hayır Emin değilim

Appendix D: Focus Group Interview Questions

1. Yabancı dilde sosyal uygunluk ile ilgili bir fikriniz var mı?
2. Yabancı dilde dilbilgisine uygun olmak hakkında ne düşünüyorsunuz?
3. Şimdi elinizdeki anketlerdeki 5, 9, 10,13 ve 17 numaralı sorulara tek tek bakıp verdiğiniz cevaplar üzerine tartışacağız. 5. Soru ile başlayalım
Soru 5: Gramer en düşük
Soru 9: Gramer en yüksek
Soru 10: Pragmatics en yüksek
Soru 13: Pragmatics en düşük
Soru 17: No problem
4. Problem olduğunu düşündüğünüz sorulardaki hataları nasıl düzeltirdiniz? Örneğin 5. Ve 13. Soruda hata olduğunu düşünmüşsünüz. Grup olarak buradaki gördüğünüz hatayı düzeltir misiniz?
5. Bu konuştuklarımızı ve anketi düşündüğünüzde, İngilizce konuşurken dikkate aldığınız faktörler nelerdir? Mesela yurtdışında bir yabancı ile İngilizce konuşmanız gereken bir durumda kaldığınızda hangi elementler sizin için önemli olur?
6. (Verilen cevaplara göre) Sizce doğru gramer yapısını kullanmak yabancı bir dil öğrenmenin en önemli elementi midir? Ders çalışırken özellikle gramere mi odaklanırsınız?
7. Sosyal uygunluk bu sıralamada sizin için nerededir? Gramerde başarılı olmak kadar önemli buluyor musunuz? İngilizce konuşup yazarken uygun bir dil kullanmaya dikkat eder misiniz?
8. Sizce gramer odaklı eğitim neden var? Bunun avantajları ve dezavantajları nelerdir?
9. Sosyal uygunluk size okulda öğretilse, bunu ister misiniz? Dil eğitiminize yararlı olacağını düşünüyor musunuz?
10. Son olarak, televizyon, sosyal medya ve internetin dil gelişiminize etkisi olduğunu düşünüyor musunuz? Bunları ne kadar kullanıyorsunuz? Ne kadarı İngilizce? Bu araçların gramer ve sosyal uygunluğa katkısı oluyor mu? Nasıl? Ne kadar?

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